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COMICS BUYER'S GUIDE®

DECEMBER 26, 2003 #1571

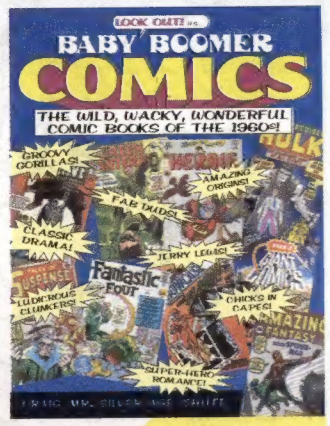
PS! A *CBG* HOLIDAY GIFT!

Will Eisner gave Santa's sleigh a tune-up.

A Santa-riffic story, Page 28

Seasons greetings from the entire* Comics Buyer's Guide *staff!

It's here, it's finally here!



Bowing to several years of fan requests, the first collection of columns by Craig Shutt (aka Mr. Silver Age) has been published by Krause Publications. *Baby Boomer Comics*, a 200-page compilation from a decade of columns devoted to the Silver Age, is now available at bookstores and comics shops or directly through Krause's book department at (800) 258-0929, offer CBHCS.

The book, illustrated in full color throughout, answers such fan questions as: "Why did Abin Sur pick Hal Jordan to be Green Lantern?" "Why couldn't Thor marry Jane Foster?" and "Why doesn't Adam Strange's rocket pack burn his toes?" Retailing for $27.99, it also contains an abbreviated Silver Age price guide.

Mr. Silver Age answers more questions about the the book on Page 30.

THE A LIST

Mythology: The DC Comics Art of Alex Ross
New X-Men #146-148
Union Station GN
The Vampire's Christmas
Necronauts
All Things Oz
Review section, page 20

CURRENT COMICS

Playing Mantis reproduces childhood memories!

Read all about it on page 15;
Current comics news coverage begins on Page 12

BACK ISSUES

Jim Mooney: "Retired?"

Catching Up With, Page 27;
Nostalgia features begin on Page 26

THE GUIDE

Connecticut museum sponsors comics exhibit!

Read all about it on Page 36;
Tales from the Database, page 44

What's shipping this week? Page 13

Visit www.collect.com/comics

RELOADING THE X-MEN

by George Nelson

With Marvel announcing that spring will bring a "reloading" of its X-Men franchise, it's official that writer Chris Claremont and artist Alan Davis will return to the company's *Uncanny X-Men*.

The two had collaborated on two issues of that title plus an Annual in the 1980s and, later, on the X-Men spin-off *Excalibur*.

Claremont's run on the title built the series into such an important part of the Marvel universe that it eclipsed in popularity such key titles as *The Fantastic Four*. Focused on a team of mutants with varying talents and the addition of the outsider Wolverine, the series evolved under Claremont's contributions from 1975 through 1980, including the death of Jean Grey and the creation of a wide variety of characters ranging from Moira MacTaggart to Kitty Pryde.

Marvel Marketing Communications Director Michael Doran told ***CBG*** this would be the first of several changes for The X-Men. There will be "new creative teams, new directions, maybe even new costumes and even new books."

There's more on Page 12!

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IT STARTS WITH **CHRIS CLAREMONT** AND **ALAN DAVIS**

This issue was shipped December 8

COMICS BUYER'S GUIDE'S CGC INDEX

For complete coverage **see page 39**

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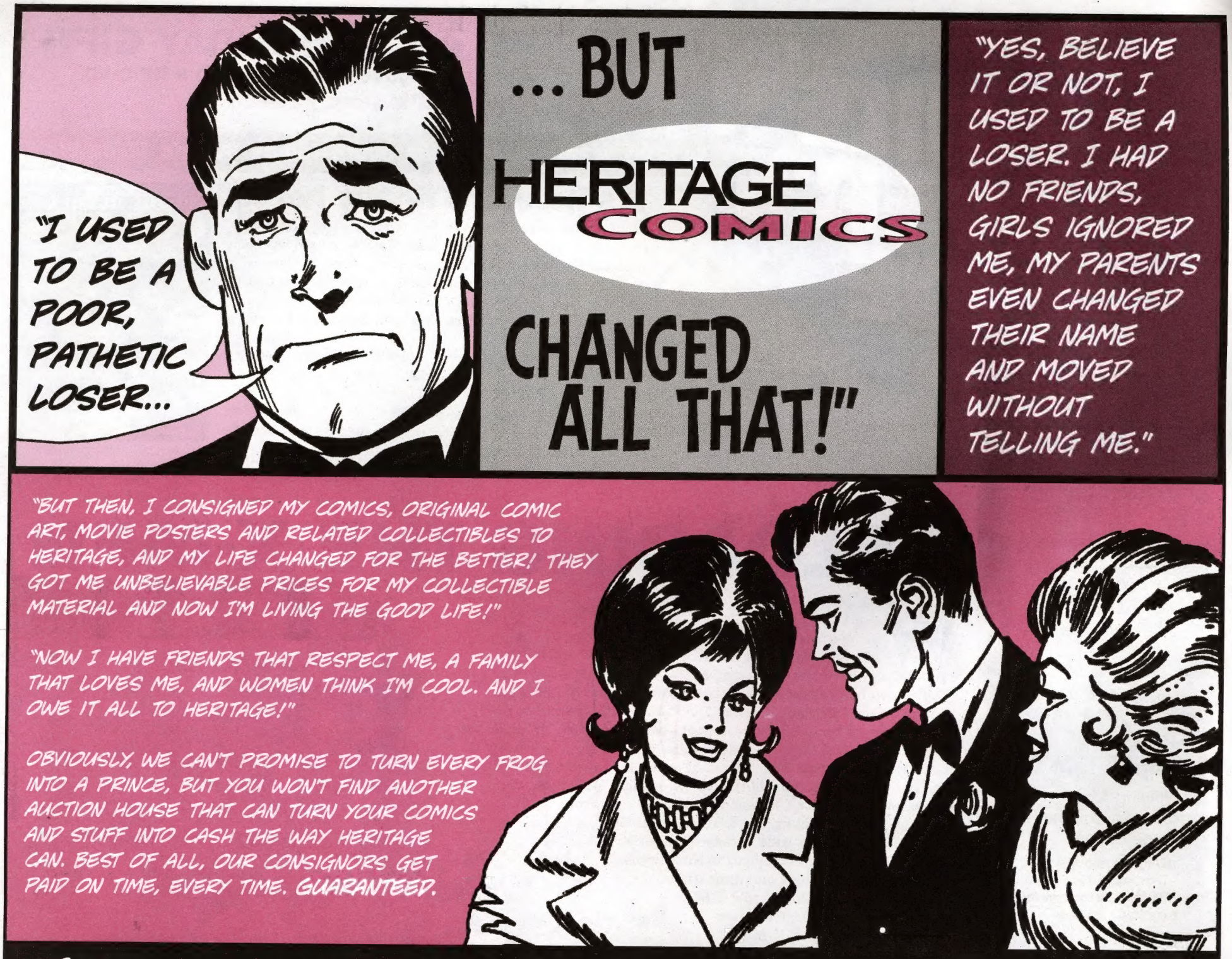
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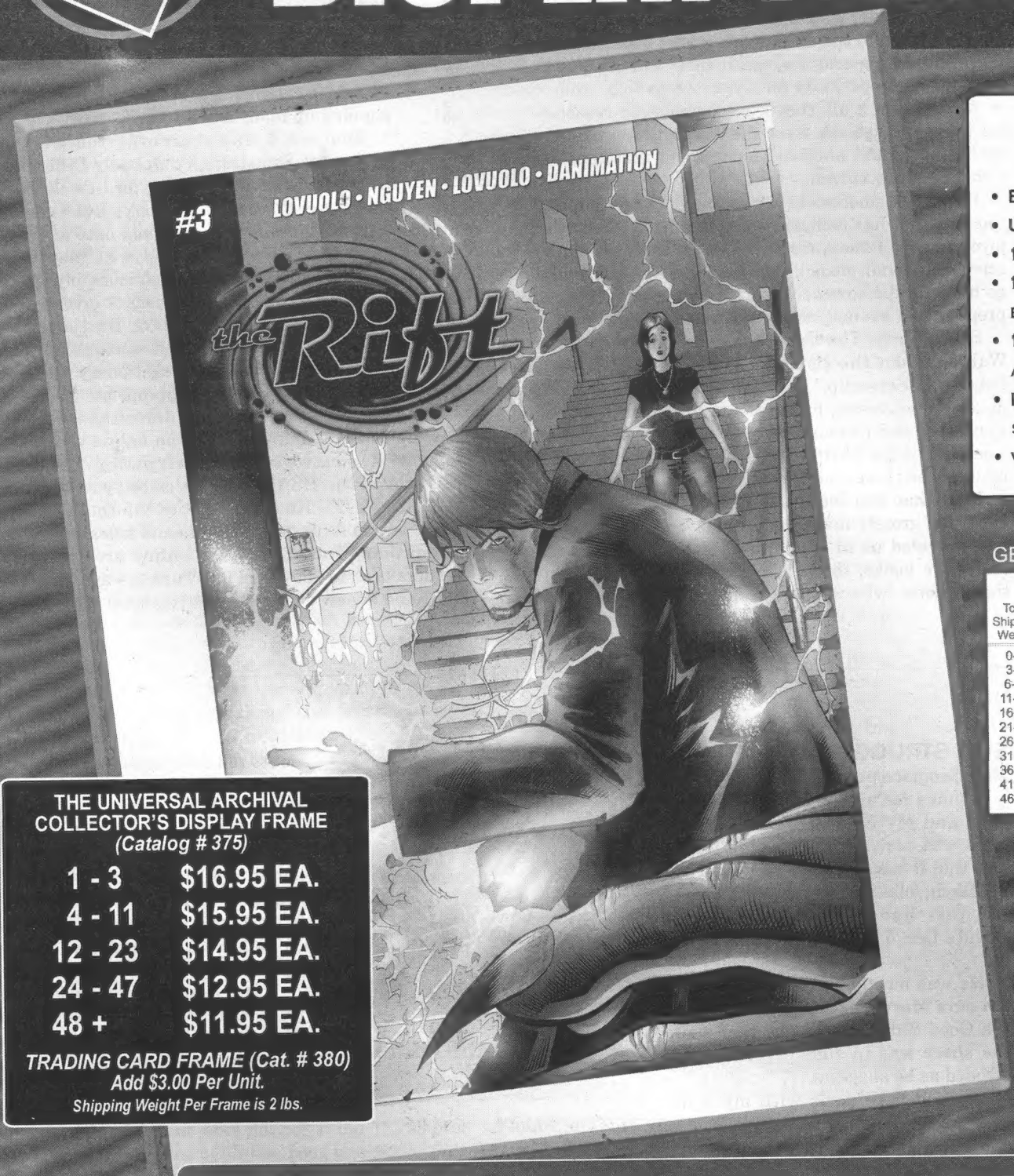

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11-15	11.50	13.25	14.00	16.50	24.00	41.50
16-20	13.25	15.75	16.75	20.50	28.00	53.75
21-25	15.75	17.50	20.50	22.25	31.50	72.00
26-30	17.50	19.75	22.75	26.00	32.00	82.50
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EDITORIAL

Serendipity

21 years of happy accidents – and counting, ho, ho!

Maggie **Thompson**

It was right about this time of year 21 years ago that Don and Maggie Thompson and Valerie (then in the midst of 10th grade) and Stephen (then in the ditto of 5th grade) were cleaning and packing and boxing all their worldly possessions in preparation for the move to Iola. And, in the midst of it all, they were keeping the reason for the move a secret, since the company wanted to make the formal announcement when the transition officially occurred.

It was just another in the steps of my serendipitous life that has included being born in a family that enjoyed science fiction, meeting Don in the first place (at a science-fictional picnic), and having *The Cleveland Press* go belly-up the summer before a young publishing entrepreneur sold his magazines to Krause Publications.

Serendipity: The term was coined by writer Horace Walpole from the title of the fairy story "The Three Princes of Serendip," because the princes "were always making discoveries, by accidents and sagacity, of things they were not in quest of." It's also summed up by the wonderful John Hartford song "I Would Not Be Here" [if I hadn't been there, and I wouldn't have been there *etc.*].

More than two decades later, I think back on December 1982: the grossly inadequate number of boxes Mayflower had provided us in which to pack books and magazines and more books, the chickenpox that hit first Stephen, then Valerie (who was still smeared with calamine lotion on Dec. 27, the day the movers arrived to pack the van, furious that so much was still not boxed [see above]), and the Christmas celebration that included closing the opened gift boxes so as to pack them for transit two days later.

And I celebrate the serendipities that keep popping up to my benefit to this day.

You see, I was searching recently for the proverbial Something Completely Different. I didn't find what I was looking for (it's *somewhere* in the house; I'll continue to look). But I came across a 1961 copy of *PS Magazine* and held onto it, remembering vaguely that we'd announced a holiday bonus for ***CBG***'s readers. Our usual such treat is simply a revisiting of past years' celebratory holiday comics covers, and I noted that one such appeared on *PS*. But, after looking through the issue, I realized that it was unlikely that Will Eisner's fans had ever seen this cautionary tale featuring Santa *and* a warning note still appropriate for all.

So here 'tis. *The Preventive Maintenance Monthly* is now up to #613, and you'll find an online version in PDF format at *www.logsa.army.mil/psmag/psonline.htm*. [LOGSA is the USAMC Logistics Support Activity, "the U.S. Army's 'Ft. Knox of logistics information and solutions" with a focus on "readiness and sustainment support to our Joint Force."] But the online archives only take readers back to #554 (Jan 99). Turn to Page 28 to travel to 1961 and a view of Eisner's instructional style. Ho ho! ✦

LETTERS

Letters **To The Editor**

EPIC STRUGGLE TO VICTORY

Mike Sangiacomo

Thanks for all the ink on *Phantom Jack* and My Epic Struggle, which I hope will turn into My Epic Victory, now that it has moved to Image (#1 out in March, folks).

I just had to respond to Peter David's Dec. 5 piece on My Epic Disaster.

He was mostly right on the money. I'm sure Marvel's reasons for crashing the Good Ship Epic on the reef while the shore was in sight were as cold-blooded as he suggests.

I would take issue with my wide-eyed "fanboy" image in writing *Nowhere Man*, er, *Phantom Jack*. I did chronicle every step in the process for *www.newsarama.com* (Thanks, Heidi, for the suggestion.), which gave everyone a front-row seat for the difficult editing process. I stuck with it, not because of a misguided fanboy zeal to put a book out, but because I was committed to finishing what I began. Granted, the editing was painful at times, but I figured it was dues-paying.

Everyone gets edited; most people are smart enough not to tell everyone about it.

I thought I was doing a service to all the poor bastards to follow me in writing for Epic. I could have bailed, but artist Mitch Breitweiser, colorist Jaime Jones, and letterer Ray Dillon were also counting on it. They had all done tons of work, and we will see it through.

And, most importantly, I believed in Epic.

If Bill Jemas had stayed on board, I think Epic would have been a success. The concept needed a lot of work, granted, but the core idea was kind of cool.

So, before I go all Jerry Lewis on you and say, "I did it for the kids, man, *the kids*," let me say that something good will come out of all this.

It'll just come out from Image.

INDUSTRY CHANGES

Matt Levin
123 Elm St.
Hatfield, MA 01038

Industry's changing. I notice how the word "bookstore"

CBG OTHER OPINIONS

- **Hey Kids!Comics!** by Heidi MacDonald 10
- **Tony's Tips** by Tony Isabella.....16
- **Tales from the Database** by Chuck Rozanski 44
- **But I Digress** by Peter David 54

comes more and more often in these pages. I agree there's too quick a rush to throw stuff into collections. I *disagree* that the pamphlets are on their way out. Would I spend $23.50 on a book called *Halo & Sprocket*? Probably not, if I hadn't gambled my $2.95 on #1 and found it to be astonishingly well done. Would *H&S* have made it to a collected book, if I *hadn't* bought issues #1, #2, #3, and #4? Maybe, maybe not — but #1 caught my attention, #2 kept it, #3 sustained it, and I'm supporting the work I enjoy, month after month.

I'm exuberant with expectation of the finish of *Cerebus*: socio-politics, crankiness, and speculative theology aside — or, indeed, because of them — what an achievement! The (ahem) whiny liberal artsy press will go wild for it. Or will, if the knowledgeable press of the comics industry does its job well (cough, cough). And (not to mix pugilists necessarily) consider the impending conclusion of *Bone*. These are achievements, no? I hope the comic-book-industry press is even now readying the PR with which to paste the mass media concerning these two publishing events.

Oh, and Daffy Duck's agent should be on the horn *now* with *Duck Dodgers* comics creators. Come on, Dark Horse or DC or *some*body — get a license worth boasting! *Duck Dodgers* is no one-note cartoon; it's got cleverness and invention.

In another thought: Gemstone might consider marketing a placement of Don Rosa's *Life and Times of Uncle Scrooge* in bookstores under "Biographies." Is it too late for this year's gift frenzy?

Norma Levin — my mother! — sent an article from *Reform Judaism* that features several pages on Jewish comics creators: essentially a recounting of the foundations of the art form, quoting Will Eisner and touting Jack Kirby and Siegel and Shuster (and, of course, referencing *Kavalier & Clay*). "Kings of Comics" (*RJ*, Fall 2003) is nine pages long, pertinently illustrated, and, while touting early comics' inherent Jewishness, is a pretty fair picture of the "days of the Escapist and his ilk."

Some obligatory mentions: *Amelia Rules, Halo & Sprocket, Wolff & Byrd, Neotopia, Usagi Yojimbo*: top-quality entertainment deserving wider exposure, as the comics industry reaches out from fanzines, collectibles mags, and the trade journal and trade paper to NPR's *Morning Edition* and *The NY Times Review of Books*.

But, hey, let me go on about some youngsters here:

Mark Wheatley's *Frankenstein Mobster* (Image) is just very seriously wacky stuff without ever drawing attention to itself as "clever." An issue #0 takes place (apparently) just prior to the title character's creation — a little police thriller in monstertown.

El Cazador (CrossGen): Three issues into this beautifully drawn pirate story, and we've had the unlikely made plausible and the stage set, promising interesting action and the possibility of intriguing interaction between strong characters.

Neotopia (Antarctic Press) is simply beautiful. The bold, brave, quick-witted princess leading her troops against evil is actually a serving girl look-a-like ("like-a-look") who ably commands creatures human and not-so in an uprising against the maleficent prince: breathtakingly scenic and cleverly written.

Smax from Alan Moore and Zander Cannon all but explodes with sly visual references and clever verbal revelations and is for "Top-Ten" fans and anyone else who'd care to pick up an offbeat romance book set in a kaleidoscope of genres.

Some really new stuff, like *Demo* and *Assembly* and *Crush* and *Caper* (all of just a single issue so far), also deserve a mention as up-and-coming, promising interesting reading and neat art.

And then there're two oldsters with new issues worth touting, Eric Shanower's *Age of Bronze* (Image) and Stan Sakai's *Usagi Yojimbo* (Dark Horse). Usagi is on a long journey with his unacknowledged son, crossing paths with ancient, magic creatures, brigands, and assassin Lone Goat with Kid. Shanower's moved the story of Greece's invasion of Troy to a point of incredible tension, as King Agamemnon is about to murder his own daughter to appease the gods

And, please, let me thank Bruce Treat for his speaking up for "comics instead of candy, this Halloween" and for me, too. It's becoming a trend, dontcha know, "comics for trick or treat." We used to have another slogan, too, when I was a retailer: "Comics make *great* stocking stuffers."

Dontcha know, they do.

Brent: *Since the* ***Duck Dodgers*** *crew belongs to Warner Bros., DC is the only company you'll find producing a* ***Dodgers*** *comic book.*

Putting Uncle Scrooge in "Biographies" is an interesting idea, but not one I expect any bookstore to do. (Many still think all of Max Collins' books are "general fiction," not mysteries.)

CBG **FOR ART'S SAKE** by Chris Smigliano

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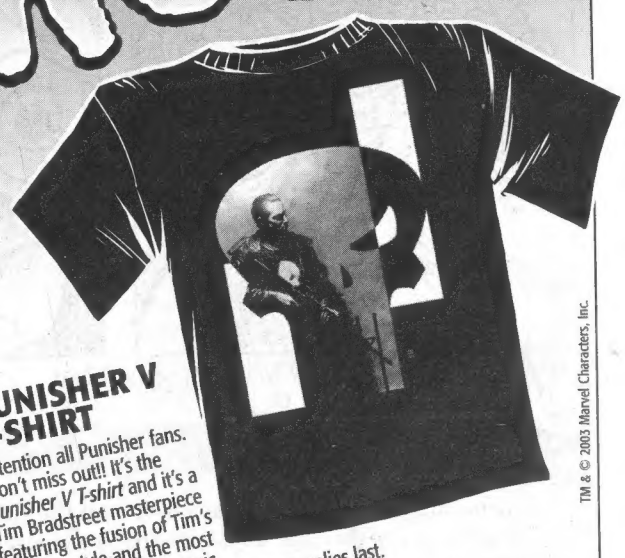

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-BRIZ '03
WELL, ANYTHING THAT ELIMINATES A THIRD OF MY PENCILING TIME CAN'T BE ALL BAD.
I MEAN, IT'S NOT LIKE MY CARTOON IS SOMETHING THAT WAS NEVER INTENDED FOR THE BIG SCREEN -- LIKE, SAY, A STAR TREK TV SHOW.

http://pmayhem.com/brizy/index.html
E-MAIL: bdahern@i2k.com

WORKS OF ART

Earl Green

I've been meaning to write, just never had the motivation. Just going through ***CBG*** #1566, saw the letter in *Oh, So?* from Don Porges about his being scared out of comics.

Let's see, the comics story that scared me most would probably be the Imaginary story from *Superman's Girlfriend Lois Lane* #46 (I think: I'm not 100% on that; if need be, please correct me) in which she became the Superwoman of Krypton.

In this classic, Earth was destroyed, instead of Krypton, and, in the ultimate role reversal, Lois had all of Supes' powers, and Kal was just a regular guy, idol-worshiping his heroine from afar.

The part that really scared me (I was only about 7 years old, after all) was the part about Earth blowing up. I remember it giving me nightmares. My dad told me as he was putting me to bed one night to forget about it and think about Superman saving the planet. "But Superman fights monsters," I told him. I eventually managed to get a decent night's sleep.

Ahh, those were the days. I never used to get Bizarro stories, but now, whenever I read them, they're hilarious.

My favorite comics story has always been, still is, and probably always will be *Batman: Son of the Demon*: a sheer work of art. The way it reads makes me feel as if I've just paid full price and I'm just sitting down at the local Imax theater to watch the Imax version of the first Keaton Batman movie. (I wish there *were* an Imax version of it. *That* would be worth buying a real DVD player for. I watch DVDs on my computer now.) I brought *Son* with me to San Diego a couple of years ago to try to get Jerry Bingham to sign it. I just wanted to be able to see him and tell him what an excellent job he did on it but I never got the chance: He was only at a couple of panels and for such a short amount of time I totally missed him.

I did, however, manage to run across Mike W. Barr in passing and managed to get him to sign it. Just as good. I would *never* put on eBay any books I had had signed: too much sentimental value, I guess.

Speaking of San Diego, I've had to miss the last two years because of having no cash. Having been unemployed for the last two and a half years, getting work when I can, times have been tough. Don't really see how I can make it next year, either, but don't think I don't miss it. I am truly in *love* with San Diego and would love to relocate there. Any chance of getting a live webcam feed from SD next year through the website *www.comic-con.org*? Getting live streaming of the masquerade would be totally awesome! I would have to stay home on a Saturday night to watch that! Yeah, I can see that happening.

But, in the meantime, I was able to finish up my school and finish my recertification. I am now a Microsoft Certified Systems Engineer on Windows 2000. It sounds nice, but that and $1.75 buys me a large coffee at the local coffee shop (*not* Starbucks).

I still love comics, even though I've stopped buying them. I just ordered *ComicBase* 8.0 yesterday. My most recent version is V. 6, bought from Pete Bickford himself at SD back in 2001, the last show I attended.

It means re-entering my collection (10,400 and thereabouts) all over again, since something happened to my backup, and my version of *CB* refuses to open it. Argh.

Congrats to JJM on the birth of his little bundle. I reviewed some comics for him from my first SD con back in 1999. I was even printed in an issue of ***CBG*** later that year. That was fun. Maybe he'd remember me, but I doubt it.

NICE PEOPLE

Rich Thigpen

6000 Canterbury Dr., #I-219
Culver City, CA 90230

Lest anyone think from Peter David's recent column that *all* staffers at DC Comics were trading in their complimentary comics at Jim Hanley's Universe, I'd like to give kudos to one I know was *not*. Patty Jeres, DC's director of sales and marketing communications, donated several *hundred* of her comps during the past year to the Emergency Department and Pediatrics Ward at UCLA Medical Center, where they are distributed by Patient Liaison volunteers and Child Life Specialist staffers. I'm also directly aware of Patty being very generous to other charitable causes by donating both comics and DC Direct merchandise.

One thing I should point out, though, to any DC staffers who want to follow Peter's suggestion to donate their comps to medical facilities: Make sure there is a knowledgeable volunteer or staffer at the facility who can screen and sort the comics into age-appropriate categories.

There is also another comics professional to whom I'd like to give public thanks. As a volunteer with Starlight Children's Foundation, I recently accompanied a boy who had suffered a spinal cord injury; he was on a day-long visit to this professional's office. I have to admit that I approached this child's wish with trepidation, since this creator — although wildly successful and well-known even outside the comics industry — often gets less-than-complimentary press.

It turned out I had nothing to fear. Not only was the creator extremely polite and engaging, but his employees all *loved* working for him and were also very friendly with us. My wish child had a wonderful time!

I also discovered that this creator *likes* getting bad press, because he can use his "difficult" reputation to his advantage in business deals! It's for this reason that I won't rat him out as a genuinely nice guy by revealing his name, but I'm bringing it up here because: 1) I know he reads ***CBG*** (there were subscription copies all over his office); and 2) Fans shouldn't judge a pro's personality by his business dealings.

Maggie: *In fact, I first became aware of Patty before she joined the DC staff. She had wanted to provide something positive in support of U.S. Armed Forces during Desert Storm and Desert Shield in 1990 and 1991, so she decided to try to work out a plan whereby shipments of comics would be provided to them.*

She came up with the concept, solved the myriad problems of a project that necessitated coordinating the anarchic direct market, a delivery system, and international regulations about content — not to mention working out the basic problem of labor required to handle the endeavor. She has consistently donated her own time and effort to help people who need help, so it was no surprise to hear that her concern for others has continued to this day.

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758HB	7 5/8 x 10 1/2	Golden Age Comics - fits 800	$9.75	$41.00	$145.00
778HB	7 7/8 x 10 1/2	Super Golden Age Comics - fits 825	$11.00	$47.00	$160.00
825HB	8 1/4 x 10 1/2	"Large Comics, Mag. & Letter"	$12.00	$50.00	$170.00
858HB	8 5/8 x 11 1/2	Standard Magazines	$13.00	$56.00	$190.00
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700M2	7 x 10 3/4	Current Comics- 1990's	$10.75	$36.00	$155.00
725M2	7 1/4 x 10 3/4	Standard Comics - 1970's-90's	$11.00	$37.00	$160.00
775M2	7 3/4 x 10 3/4	Silver/Gold Comics - 1950's-70's	$11.50	$38.00	$165.00
800M2	8 x 10 3/4	Golden Age Comics - 1940's-50's	$12.00	$39.00	$175.00
825M2	8 1/4 x 10 3/4	Super Golden Age Comics	$12.50	$42.00	$180.00
875M2	8 3/4 x 12	Large Comics, Mag. & Letter	$12.75	$43.00	$185.00
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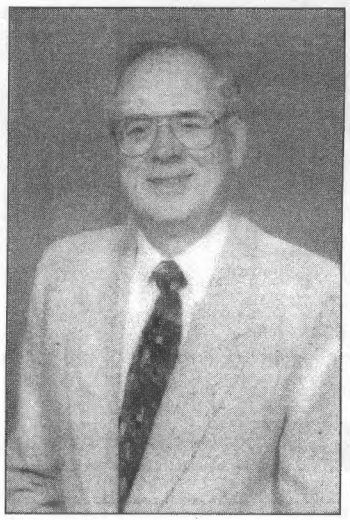
CARL HORAK, 1938-2003

Ralph Annan
9610 Clyde St.
Hudson, FL 34669

I don't know what your criteria are concerning people of "note" in the field of comics or whom you consider important. Perhaps it's a matter of perspective. Anyway, in that regard, one of the great icons of the fanzine world passed away a few months ago, and no one seemed to have sent out the news — which surprises me greatly, since he had friends in high places. Once I mention his name, you'll recognize him as a ***CBG*** contributor. In fact, it was his ad in ***CBG*** that led to my subscribing to his *Journal*.



The person I am writing about is the late and great Carl Horak, creator and editor of the now-defunct *Caniffites Journal*, one of the finest fanzines ever published. For those of us who are fans of Milton Caniff (*Terry and the Pirates* and *Steve Canyon*), this nonprofit journal was a joyous addition to our lives. (One of its frequent contributors was R.C. Harvey, who has written the definitive biography on Caniff.) Bob Bindig was the associate editor at the time of Carl's demise.

Carl was an ardent admirer of Caniff and praised him as a storyteller and an artist. He'd met Caniff and had accumulated a large collection of his works, memorabilia included. A lot was sent to him by Caniff himself, who also often wrote letters to the *Journal*. Others too numerous to mention (R.C. Harvey and Shel Dorf, for example) were constant contributors, making *Caniffites* a first rate publication.

Carl died after an extensive struggle with throat cancer. His wife, Myrna, wrote a bittersweet eulogy to his passing in *Caniffites Journal* #118, the final issue, which also included Carl's final editorial. He knew it was the end. (*Caniffites Journal* #118 is available at SPEC Productions, c/o Andy Feighery, P.O. Box 32, Manitou Springs, CO 80829, if anyone is interested.)

Carl was born in Assiniboia, Saskatchewan, graduated from the University of Saskatchewan, Saskatoon, with a B.A. and B. Ed., and received his Masters of Art Degree at the University of Calgary. He taught at a number of schools, finally moving to Calgary in 1962, where he taught. He was also a cartoonist and co-founder of the Alberta Comic Collectors' Association. Memorial tributes may be made to the St. Vincent de Paul Socity.

IOLA ODYSSEY

Rob Salkowitz
321 Boylston Ave. E., #306
Seattle, WA 98102

I'm writing this note to let ***CBG*** readers know what a great group of folks are behind our favorite weekly reading matter on all things comics. Over the Thanksgiving holiday, my girlfriend and I made our annual pilgrimage to her home planet of Little Chute, Wis. — which, we discovered, is right up the road from ground zero of the Krause Publishing Empire in Iola.

Since I write the occasional review for ***CBG***, I thought it would be nice to see the home office and put faces to a couple of names I had only seen at the bottom of e-mails. Despite a deadline crunch due to the short holiday week, Brent and Maggie graciously extended an invitation to drop by the Krause digs. Even superscribe Nate Melby, the hardest-working man in comics journalism, found time to join us for lunch. After treating us to sandwiches at the finest deli in Scandinavia, Wis., they left us to the tender mercies of Editorial Director John Jackson Miller — Marvel's new hot writer on the block — who not only gave us an extensive tour of the Krause facility, but also took us to see his own collection.

All of this made for a wonderful afternoon and a completely unexpected bonus in the typical holiday-family-stuff-your-face routine. On behalf of Eunice and myself, thanks to the whole crew for the fun and informative tour, great conversation, and various goodies. And, if you're ever out in Seattle, be sure to look us up!

Maggie: *It's always a pleasure to hang out with nice folks!*

Thanks for thinking of us in the midst of holiday-family-stuff-your-face events!

HE WANTS THEM ALL

Walter Spiro
327 Woodward Rd.
Nassau, NY 12123

You ask, "What comics story would you most like to have available in printed form?" This is a joke, right? The reason I say this is that I want them *all* available in reprinted form. I have two children, and I love sharing my DC and Marvel *Archives* with them. My 10-year-old son's favorite reprints are "The Monster Society of Evil" and the *Plastic Man Archives*. My brother just finished getting all the *Legion of Super-Hero Archives* for his 10-year-old son. My 13-year-old "too cool" brand, spanking-new teen daughter, Anna, reads *Bone* and *The Spirit Archives* and loves Alan Moore.

We had a very enjoyable evening fighting over who got to read the latest issue of *Smax*. Lots of tickling and yelling. We are all disappointed in CrossGen for discontinuing the anthology comics, since we all enjoyed them — *but*, by and large, we buy hardcovers and tradē paperbacks. They stand up to repeated readings and allow us to read and discuss entire storylines. Lucas is always trying to find out the "backstory" of some character or another.

Something that I haven't heard mentioned in ***CBG*** is that reprinting this material creates a demand for the *new* material. My kids have a lot more "invested" in the characters because they have read stuff from before they were born. Who do you think in our house is chomping at the bit for the new *Plastic Man* series? A 10-year-old. Isn't that great? Do you think he would even *care* without the DC *Archives*? Not a chance.

Finally, kudos to Graphic Imaging Technology, Inc. (*www.gitcorp.com*) for their release of 100 Silver Age Marvel comics on CD-ROM for $30. Now, if only they would release the Golden Age Timely stuff and *everything* else that is just languishing. The fact is that having these things available generates interest. Attached is my letter to Sandy at GIT Corp. regarding its product. The one major fault I have with the *Archives* reprints (besides the snail's pace with which they come out) is that I really would like to see the whole comic books reprinted: covers, ads, letters pages, *etc.*

It is so exciting that someone is actually releasing this stuff. Wouldn't it be a good idea to do a story on them or perhaps tell them, as I did, that we would like to see the whole package reprinted? CD-ROMS are ideally suited to printing the whole comic book. Per-

LAST KISS — BY JOHN LUSTIG

Part 2 of 2: Worried that her daughter's passion for manga is out of control, Caitie's mom is thrilled when Caitie finally shows interest in something besides Japanese comics!

Penciller unknown Inks by Dick Giordano

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B-B-BUT IT'S MY TURN TO BE SAILOR MOON! YOU PROMISED!

Manga Madness: It's more than an obsession! It's a lifestyle!

haps ***CBG*** could open up a dialogue and have a contest for what fandom would like to see in GIT Corp.'s next volume and pass the results on to them. Imagine rereading Stan's bombastic prose from the *Bullpen* page or the letters page for the first time in 30 — no, make that 40 — years. Gee, I must be getting real old to be able to say that and mean it. Seriously, these folks could use the input of what we, the fans, want to see. So, to me, the question is: Do you want to see just stories reprinted *à la* "Archives" or do you want to see whole runs of the entire issues of different comic books reprinted? You know me. I want more.

Dear Sandy (GIT CORP):

Thank you for bringing out the Marvel Comics CD. I hope you get a license from DC and release CDs from them, as well.

Years ago there was a CD of Art Spiegelman's *Maus*, but it was an Apple-only CD. It would be wonderful, if you could release this Pulitzer Prize-winning work to a wider audience via a CD for Windows.

Just to give you an idea of the demographic, I am a 49-year-old lawyer and I would be over the moon if I could buy a new CD of old comics material every month. Right now, I am buying every *Archive* book that DC puts out, but they are terribly slow, and I will be retired before they release everything I want.

You have the ability to release vast amounts of this material at a very reasonable price.

So *please* release some Golden Age Marvel (actually Timely Company) and *please* consider releasing copies of the entire comic book, including the backups, ads, and letters pages. No one has ever fully reprinted this material, and part of the charm of the early Marvel Comics was the "Bullpen" and letters pages. You could be the first to reprint this material *ever.*

I have read reprints of *Action Comics* #1 with Superman *but* I have never seen the full issue of #2 or any other issue; same for Batman and other DC heroes. Actually, the only Marvel comic from the Golden Age I have seen reprinted was *Marvel Comics* #1. These books were all 64 pages long filled with backup features and text features and they have never been reprinted. It would be a gas to read all of this material that hasn't been seen in 63 years.

I heard about this product because it was mentioned in *Comics Buyer's Guide.* I don't know if you have done so (I haven't seen one), but it would probably be worth your while to place an ad there, as well as marketing this CD and others to libraries. More and more libraries have sections devoted to comics, and, apparently, they are heavily utilized.

If you have a mailing list, please put me on it. I wouldn't want to miss a single CD. How about subscriptions? That would be great. Thank you.

Maggie: *Some fans gripe that they enjoy reading comics in their original paper formats — and there's nothing wrong with that. But reprinting comics on CD-ROMs would at least provide access to the stories. And, since large numbers of fans complain about collecting methods that make reading the comics impossible, it'd seem they should be happy about anything that makes the stories available.*

Comics on CD-ROMS shouldn't interfere with prices of back-issue comics and it could increase enthusiasm for the stories themselves. But, of course, rights need to be cleared on any such projects. It behooves people who like such things, therefore, to buy what seem to be tests of the desirability of the format.

BWF: Maus *was available for both Mac and PC. Sadly, it (and other products from the company) are incompatible with newer versions of Windows.* ✦

***CBG* Reader Question of the Week #1571:**

What will be the big comics news story of 2004? Why?

Send your response to Oh, So?, ***Comics Buyer's Guide***, 700 E. State St., Iola, WI 54990, or to ***ohso@krause.com***.

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The creator's rights conundrum, Part 2

The (basic) ins and outs of copyright

By **Heidi MacDonald**

If you recall, a few columns ago, I started looking at the issue of creator ownership in comics and why comics publishers generally look it at very cautiously. This is surprising, in some ways, because, in looking at other media, the idea of "creator ownership" is generally more accepted. In fact, I thought I would survey some other media to see how they generally handle creator ownership.

Before getting into all of this boring legal stuff, I should point out that I'm not a lawyer or an agent. This is a very broad overview of issues, and I would never pass myself off as an expert in copyright law. I do have the proverbial "working knowledge" of copyright, as anyone who works as a writer or editor should, however.

With that caveat out of the way, let's start at the beginning.

As defined by the 1978 copyright law, the minute you scribble, doodle, or noodle anything, you own the copyright. You don't have to mail it to yourself, register it with the Library of Congress, or put it in a sealed envelope in a safe deposit box. You created it, you own it, whether it's a 100,00-word novel or a little song about a hamster you hammered out on your glockenspiel. (It does not apply to your 500,000-word tale about how a human woman was transported to Middle Earth and cavorted with Legolas Greenleaf in his woodland realm — but that's another topic entirely.) The copyright is yours to reassign and it can only be reassigned by a written contract. But, supposing you want someone besides you and your cat to experience this work of art, you must get it distributed via publishing, duplication, or some other means.

I should point out here that the World Wide Web pretty much threw out all the old notions of duplication. Just ask anyone in the music biz about that. Photocopying a Stephen King novel one page at a time is one kind of "theft" not many people would have the patience to carry out. Hitting "download" is something almost anyone would do, and the legalities of such use are still being hammered out in court and likely will be for some time.

Anyway, back to that God-given copyright. You may have created the next *Yahoo Serious*. Or you may have created the next *Harry Potter*. The copyright means the exclusive right to copy and sell a work. If you copied that Stephen King novel for your own reading pleasure, you probably wouldn't get in any trouble, except with the person who replaces the toner in the copy machine (although I believe technically it is illegal). If you decided to sell your own photocopies of *The Dark Tower*, then you probably would get in trouble, since you were violating the copyright.

In addition, the copyright law has other provisions to protect creators. Even assuming you *did* reassign the copyright to a work of art, after a certain amount of time, you can still get it back. For the sake of simplicity, I'll use works created after Jan. 1, 1978, as an example, since older works are much more complex. Basically, if you create something and reassign your copyright, either 35 years after publication or 40 years after the signing of the agreement, you can apply to regain the copyright. (This was the basis of the now-settled Joe Simon lawsuit for the rights to Captain America.) This law was put into place because it assumes that, when you signed away the copyright, you didn't know any better and now you might want it back.

Let's start with book publishing. In general, when you open the copyright page of a book, you'll see it's copyrighted in the author's name. There are lots of exceptions, but it's a general practice, even for many nonfiction books. That doesn't mean that the author hasn't assigned the right to reproduce and exploit the work in question for perpetuity in all known galaxies, at a penny a copy. In addition, when a book goes out of print, the author can get back the rights, depending on the exact language of the contract.

"The minute you scribble, doodle, or noodle anything, you own the copyright."

Just because the author owns the copyright doesn't mean he or she is getting paid huge royalties or can negotiate with a movie studio on his or her own to make a movie.

All of that is negotiated separately, and it is ultimately a much more practical indication of whether the author is being fairly compensated. But you can bet that Michael Crichton's royalty terms have improved since he wrote his first novel, and the same is true for all authors whose work sells. It's in a publisher's best interest to keep happy an author who makes them money.

There are ripoffs and heartaches aplenty in the publishing world; in a generalized way, however, it would be accurate to say that the creator is assumed to own the rights and they are his or hers to sell, just like the golden goose.

In another very generalized way, it's safe to say that, while *Dungeons & Dragons*, *Star Trek*, and *Star Wars* books sell very well, the main interest of the book-publishing world is to discover the next Tom Clancy, Danielle Steel, or Patrick O'Brian — and, once they do get them, to make sure they write as many books as possible. The commodity is storytelling and entertainment, and these are the people who provide it.

Simple, eh? Since book publishing is the oldest and most established form of "mass media," it has the simplest rules.

After this it gets pretty crazy.

Let's look at another example, songwriting. Or let's not.

The rules and regulations about songwriting and how it is profited from are so incredibly complex and arcane that no one except a few people who work at ASCAP and BMI even pretend to understand it. Music is all around us. When you're eating a burrito at The Happy Taco and they're playing Johnny Cash's version of "Ring of Fire" on the loudspeaker — in theory, June Carter and Merle Kilgore or their heirs are getting paid for that performance. (Yes, it was Johnny's beloved June who co-wrote his signature hit — cool, huh?)

However, we'll go back to that kid with the glockenspiel. After "Hoppy the Hamster" is written, it needs to be put in some copyrightable form — either sheet music or a recorded demo. Let's say Richie Rockstar goes on to form a band with his neighbors, The Guinea Pigs. They write and record 12 fine songs, including "Hoppy the Hamster," for their first album for the Rodent Records label. I'm not going to get into the insanity of the music biz (which, if you look at all the top stars who sue their labels, is probably the creative field most seeded with mines). However, in general — that's *general*, mind you — publishing on a song is separate from the recorded work. It *has* to be, since the recording and the song itself are separate works of art. Songwriters usually split the publishing rights to their songs. A common practice is to split it 50/50 with a publisher. Then, when Mariah Carey does her heartbreaking cover version of "Hoppy the Hamster" guest-starring Jay-Z and 50 Cent, Richie Rockstar still gets his share of the money. The label generally owns the copyright to the recording, unless you are an ultra-super-star, but even this is rare.

Songwriters sign up with one of two performing rights organizations, ASCAP or BMI, which are set up to monitor and pay royalties on songs that are performed in any known medium. They take their job seriously. I know someone who wrote lyrics for a song parody on a TV special, and for a while he received ludicrously small checks from ASCAP for presumed reruns and so on. To put this in perspective, if you write a hit song, a "Yesterday" or an "I Will Always Love You," we're talking millions of dollars in royalties over the years.

Lots of young, inexperienced songwriters give away the publishing rights to their songs through various means. Or they get lost in business shuffles — the most famous example being Michael Jackson buying the publishing rights to the Beatles catalog. Jackson only owns the publishing rights, which means he gets the publisher's 50% of the royalties from recordings, performances, and so on. Songwriting isn't what it used to be. It's not so easy to write the next "Yesterday," especially since producers have taken over the "*auteur's*" role in music today. However, once again, the copyright is yours to fritter away.

Next week: movies, comic strips, and whatever else I can dredge up. ✦

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Heidi can be e-mailed at ***comixace@aol.com****.*

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KAF28R	6-15/16 x 10-3/8	Intermediate	0.028	7.15	12.80	20.00	80.65	142.20
KAF40R		Superior	0.040	12.50	23.10	40.35	175.15	304.70
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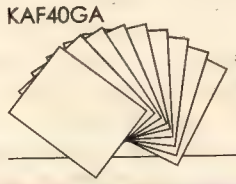
KAF28DSA	7-3/16 x 10-3/8	Intermediate	0.028	8.60	13.65	21.10	85.75	150.65
KAF40DSA		Superior	0.040	13.35	23.45	44.35	185.75	322.95
KCB30GA	**GOLDEN AGE COMIC**	Economy	0.030	4.65	7.15	11.25	45.10	76.90
KAF28GA	7-11/16 x 10-3/8	Intermediate	0.028	9.20	14.25	22.40	90.10	159.30
KAF40GA		Superior	0.040	14.40	26.05	45.40	196.90	342.40



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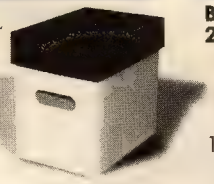

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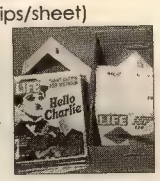

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Canceled comics, we hardly knew ye!

The Captain analyzes several sundered series.
Dear Captain, Page 18

IN BRIEF

Image concludes *Feather* early

Image Comics has announced that Steve Uy's *Feather*, solicited as a six-issue mini-series, will now end after five issues with a 48-page one-shot due in stores in May.

"*Feather* has not been shortened in any way," Uy said. "The reason for this change will be quite evident upon #4's release: Given the brutality of the storyline, it seems unfair to break up the final act of *Feather* into two separate issues, two months apart, so the final two issues will be amalgamated into one big issue. To do otherwise would have frustrated too many readers and would have done a disservice to the storytelling.

Feather #4 is available for order now in the December issue of *Previews* and will go on sale in February. *Feather* #3 is due in stores Dec. 10.

BULLETINS AT ONCE!

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Claremont, Davis reunite on *Uncanny X-Men*

New creative team first step in overhaul of X-line

By **George Nelson**

Next year will see the return of long-time X-Men writer Chris Claremont and artist Alan Davis to the pages of Marvel's *Uncanny X-Men*, the first step announced in what a Marvel spokesperson described as a "reloading period" for the franchise.

Davis confirmed that he and Claremont would take over *Uncanny* during an interview at this year's Mid-Ohio Con in Columbus, Ohio, on Thanksgiving weekend. Speculation has run rampant about what Davis would be working on since Marvel announced this fall that Davis had signed an exclusive contract with the publisher.

Davis, who signed an exclusive agreement with Marvel that begins in January, said he is looking forward to collaborating with Claremont again. "Of course — without any doubt," Davis said. "That's one of the attractions of doing it." Having collaborated on two issues of *Uncanny* as well as an annual in the 1980s, Claremont and Davis later worked together on the spin-off title *Excalibur*, which featured X-Men characters Nightcrawler, Shadowcat, and Phoenix (Rachel Summers) along with Captain Britain and related characters.

During a Nov. 30 interview, Davis said he did not know what issue would begin the run on *Uncanny* but that it would be next year.

Marvel Marketing Communications Manager Michael Doran confirmed that Claremont and Davis would take over *Uncanny* in the spring, though he also did not specify what issue would be the creative team's first. "We're not ready to pin down the issues," he said.

According to Doran, Claremont and Davis were interested in working together again; he said he thought the two would appeal to both old and new X-Men fans.

"Alan certainly has a style that has very broad appeal to all kinds of X-Men fans," he said, adding that Marvel believes Claremont "has stories in him that can appeal to all X-Men fans of all ages."

This is only the first of several changes coming to the X-Men universe next year, Doran said.

"The new creative team on *Uncanny* is part of what we're calling a 'reloading' period for the X-Men franchise in spring of 2004: new creative teams, new directions, maybe even new costumes and even new books.

"We're going to bring some color back to the costumes," he added. "You'll see more individual treatment and you'll see a little more color."

Doran said Marvel wanted to find new names to reinvigorate the franchise as well as "veterans that are going to be energized with the changes. It's certainly not a case of 'kick out the old and bring on the new' — just having creators with different voices come in and tell stories for all types of audiences."

As writer of *Uncanny*, Claremont redefined the team series, created by Stan Lee and Jack Kirby in the 1960s and revamped by Len Wein in *Giant-Size X-Men* #1 (Summer 1975). It was Claremont's long run that established The X-Men as Marvel's anchor franchise. Not only did he write the primary series, but he also provided stories for a number of mini-series, graphic novels, and spinoff titles, including *Wolverine* and *New Mutants*. He launched the adjectiveless *X-Men* series shortly before being dismissed from both it and *Uncanny* in 1991.

Claremont returned to the world of X-Men in 2000 for about a year. He served as editorial director at Marvel and currently writes *X-Treme X-Men* and provided the novelization of the 2003 *X2: X-Men United* movie.

Doran did not elaborate on what the current announcement means for *X-Treme X-Men* or for current *Uncanny* writer Chuck Austen or Salvador Larocca, who was scheduled to come on as the title's new artist, but said announcements regarding the assortment of X-Men series would be made soon.

He said, "This is just sort of one piece of the puzzle. I really can't get into what's going to be happening with the other creators and the other books at this point. It could be a matter of a week or a matter of a couple weeks, but certainly within the next few weeks."

In a 2002 interview at the Baltimore Comicon, Claremont had said that Marvel had wanted to take *X-Men* "in a substantially different direction than it had been in the previous 20-odd years," when he was taken off the titles.

"They felt this could be more readily and effectively accomplished with a complete change of creative staff," he added. "That's their prerogative; that's their company."

Though the relationship between the writer and Marvel has been rocky at times, Claremont said he has been satisfied overall with his association with The X-Men.

"On one hand, I had a substantial part to play in creating the most successful comic-book franchise in modern history, I'm responsible for writing the best-selling comic in modern history, I'm responsible for helping make Marvel the company it is and the industry it is today," he reflected. "It balances out a whole multitude of complaints." ✦

INSIDE THIS SECTION

- **Tony's Tips** by Tony Isabella.....16
- **Dear Captain** by Andrew Smith.....18
- **Reading Room**.....18
- **Comics Guide** by Maggie Thompson.....20

Seven at one blow

Marvel says February will be Bendis month

By **Nate Melby**

Marvel Comics is hoping to cash in on the work of Eisner Award-winning writer Brian Michael Bendis in February, when the company celebrates Brian Bendis month. In a move that brings to mind Jack the Giant-Killer, Marvel will release seven different Bendis-written titles in February, including a new ongoing series and a new mini-series.

Bendis will continue to write *Ultimate Spider-Man*, *Ultimate X-Men*, *Ultimate Fantastic Four*, and *Ultimate Six*, while returning to *Daredevil* and beginning *The Pulse* and *Secret War*.

"As always, I am equally flattered and disgusted with myself," Bendis told ***CBG***. "Honestly, other writers will know what I am talking about, but it hasn't been that hard. *Secret Wars* #1 was written about a year and a half ago but it is a book that takes a lot of production time. After this, though, everything is back on schedule. I am back on *Daredevil* and what was *Alias* after a hiatus, so there were actually a lot of skipped months where I had a lot of time to get things done. I am already done with *Ultimate X-Men*, so it is this weird cross-section of work that I have done coming out around the same time."

New titles: His MAX *Alias* series wrapped up in November, and Bendis will restart the title under the regular Marvel imprint as *The Pulse*. With pencils by *Ultimate Spider-Man* penciller Mark Bagley and covers by Mike Mayhew, the series will now follow *The Daily Bugle*'s new team of super-hero journalists: Jessica Jones, Kat Farrell, and Ben Urich. Bendis said the decision to remove the MAX imprint from the title had not been forced on him.

"It is not so much leaning towards all-ages, as the book is kind of writing itself in that direction. I am not trying to shove anything into a box it doesn't fit in. *Alias* had a theme and a purpose, and that theme and purpose came to a peak — and the point of *Alias* had been made — so we had to decide what was next for the character.

"In the Max book, it is about the sex, the language, and the violence — and the sex for us was always about a mature theme, as opposed to titillation. It was never a sexy book; it was just about adults who happened to have a sex life. The language was abundant and there was violence there — but limited. *Alias* was probably my *least* violent book, probably less violent than *Ultimate Spider-Man*. That said, I figured, if I don't use the 'F' word, I can use The X-Men and Spider-Man and I can do a *Secret Wars* arc.

"In a MAX title, what you *don't* want is kids picking up *Alias* by accident because Spider-Man's on the cover. There is a responsibility there, and certainly I have proven to myself on *Daredevil* that I can be gritty and adult without swearing.

"Any opportunity that comes about where you can't swear always brings up more of an opportunity for me to be more creative. In real life, kids swear all the time, but, in *Ultimate Spider-Man*, we can't have any swearing, so I am always finding rich new ways to produce dialogue that does not involve swearing."

Also beginning in February will be a new quarterly five-issue mini-series, *Secret War*, with painted art by Gabriele Dell'Otto. The publisher has said *Secret War* will reveal one of the darkest chapter in the Marvel universe. The story begins when Nick Fury finds a connection between some of Marvel's villains and puts together a team of Marvel's misunderstood heroes. That will lead to a blowout between a "Who's Who" of NYC heroes and mutants.

Continuing *X-Men*: Bendis will continue the "New Mutants" storyline and introduce Dazzler in *Ultimate X-Men* #42, with pencils by David Finch.

"*Ultimate X-Men* was a lot of fun, and our best issues are ahead of us," Bendis told ***CBG***.

"David and I had a lot of fun on our 'Blockbuster' story arc, and I hope people buy it. The reason I stayed on the book, even though I was only supposed to do six issues, was that David and I really clicked as a creative team and I didn't want to leave. I had some mutant stories that I wanted to tell. I think *Ultimate X-Men* #40 and #41 are as good as anything I have done at Marvel and I am excited for them to come out.

"Doing Dazzler was a lot of fun — plus we are going to get to see Emma Frost. Someone is going to die — and then, after that, Brian Vaughan has this unvelieveable story for an arc that I am mad I didn't think of."

Returning and continuing: Bendis returns to *Daredevil* in January, after David Mack's five-issue arc, with "The King of Hell's Kitchen." The second installment of the "Hell's Kitchen" arc is in February.

Other Bendis-written titles that will be published by Marvel in February include *Ultimate Fantastic Four* #3, *Ultimate Six* #7 (of 7), and *Ultimate Spider-Man* #53.

Bendis concluded, "A lot of this was done a very long time ago and I am very excited that it is coming out. I was *also* very happy that the company is happy enoughwith the quality of the work to promote it the way it has." ✦

IN BRIEF

Splendor nominations

When the film was released during the summer, many viewers commented that Harvey Pekar's *American Splendor* would be a contender for many industry awards.

Confirmation for that opinion has begun; *American Splendor* was nominated for the Independent Spirit Awards for Best Picture, and actor Paul Giamatti, who played Pekar, is nominated for Best Actor.

Winners will be announced Feb. 28 in Santa Monica, Calif., in ceremonies that will be broadcast. The show will air live at 5 p.m. ET on the Independent Film Channel and repeated at 10 p.m. ET on Bravo the same day.

Simone goes exclusive with DC

Gail Simone, writer of *Birds of Prey* and *Rose & Thorn*, has signed a one-year exclusive contract with DC Comics. Simone will also be working on a *JLA* story arc with Jose Luis Garcia-Lopez and Klaus Janson.

"From the moment I started working with DC, they've been nothing short of phenomenal," Simone said. "I literally don't have a single decent complaint! I'm working with fantastic, brilliant editors like Mike Carlin, Lysa Hawkins, and Steve Wacker on a wide variety of books. So, yes, I'm happy. Ecstatic might be a better word. I can't wait to announce some of the upcoming plans."

NEW COMICS shipping Dec. 21-27

The following information is taken from publisher and distributor solicitations and updates and is as accurate as possible at press time. Check with your local retailer to find out what day new comics go on the shelves. Comics that are delayed or rescheduled will be tracked in future *CBG Calendars*.

Note: ✪ indicates a rescheduled comic book that appeared in a previous *CBG Calendar*.

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Chosen #1, $2.99
Crush #3, $2.99
Ghost In The Shell 2: Man Machine Interface #11, $3.50
Shrek TP, $12.95
Star Wars Tales #18, (two covers $5.99)
Super Manga Blast! #38, $5.99

DC Comics

✪ *Arrowsmith* #5, $2.95 (Nov. 16-22)
Batman #622, $2.25
Birds of Prey #62, $2.50
Cartoon Cartoons #25, $2.25
Catwoman #26, $2.50
Green Lantern: Willworld SC, $17.95
iCandy #4, $2.50
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Legion #28, $2.50
Losers #7, $2.95
✪ *Smax* #4, $2.95 (Nov. 16-22)
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Mythstalkers #8, $2.95
✪ *Powers* #36, $2.95 (Oct. 12-18)
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✪ *Romp One Shot*, $5.95 (Nov. 30-Dec. 6)
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Avengers Vol. 2: Red Zone TP, $14.99
Human Torch #8, $2.99
Inhumans #8, $2.99
Inhumans Vol. 1: Lunar TP, $14.99
Mystique #9, $2.99
✪ *Punisher* #37, $2.99 (Dec. 7-13)
Silver Surfer #4, $2.25
✪ *Ultimate Adventures* #6, $2.99 (Sep 7-13)
Uncanny X-Men #436, $2.25
✪ *Venom* #9, $2.25 (Dec. 7-13)
X-Statix #17, $2.99
X-Treme X-Men #38, $3.50

Viz

Alice 19th Vol. 2 GN, $9.95
Animerica Extra Jan 2003 Vol. 7 #1, $4.95
Hot Gimmick Vol. 2 TP, $9.95
Inu-Yasha Vol. 16 TP, $8.95

NOW APPEARING!

December 13

Alex Ross (*JLA: Liberty and Justice)* and **Chip Kidd** (*Mythology*) at Chicago Comics, 33244 N. Clark St., Chicago, **Illinois** 60657, from 3 to 6 p.m.

Kyle Baker (*Plastic Man*) at That's Entertainment, 244 Park Ave. (Rt. 9), Worcester, **Massachusetts** 01609, from noon to 3 p.m.

Mark Bagley (*Ultimate Spider-Man* artist) at Comic Books, Etc!, 1105 Parkside Lane, Ste. 1212, Woodstock, **Georgia** 30189, from 2 to 4 p.m.

December 17

Dean Haspiel, Gabe Soria, Vito Delsante, Alex Robinson, Mike Lily, Chris Radtke, and **Mike Dawson** at Jim Hanley's Universe, 4 W. 33rd St., New York, **New York** 10001, from 5 to 8 p.m.

*[**Editor's Note:** Send items for this feature to **Now Appearing**, c/o **Comics Buyer's Guide**, 700 E. State St., Iola, Wis. 54990, fax it (again c/o **CBG**) to (715) 445-4087, or e-mail it to **cbgnews@krause.com**.]*

What happened to me?

Creators respond in comic-book format

By **Nate Melby**

Comics fans know that Frank Miller can write Batman, Daredevil, Marv, Martha, and more — but how does Frank Miller write Frank Miller? Fans will learn personal stories of Miller and other comics creators in *Autobiographix*, a 104-page graphic anthology out now from Dark Horse Comics for $14.95.

Dark Horse Editor Diana Schutz told ***CBG***, "You have a much better chance of selling an anthology in today's market, if you incorporate it around a given theme. I was already planning — even before we moved to the book size — to make my annual anthologies thematic. I have always loved autobiographies, so I have actually been planning on doing this for quite a while."

Along with Miller, the volume includes autobiographical tales by such comics creators as Matt Wagner, Will Eisner, Linda Medley, Sergio Aragonés, Stan Sakai, Paul Chadwick, William Stout, and Jason Lutes.

Schutz said she'd wanted to get a cross-section of creators to help put the book together.

"I like to play with a wide variety of creators. I don't tend to skew entirely toward alternative and I don't tend to skew entirely to commercial. I am *such* a comics geek, I love all manner of stuff — and that is reflected when I put anthologies together. There were some people that I wanted to see do some autobio stuff and there were some people whose work I am really fond of and wouldn't necessarily have a chance to work with, otherwise."

How an editor gets the likes of Stan Sakai and Paul Chadwick to reveal a personal narrative to their fans is a different story.

Schutz said, "There is a line in my afterword that says, 'My thanks go to each of the cartoonists herein, especially to those whom I alternately cajoled or browbeat for their participation.' Frank, in particular, was pretty wary about moving into auto-bio for the first time, but I really think his story is hilarious — and that is why I opened with his story, 'Man with Pen in Head.'

"He is full of wonderful stories about living in New York and, during the course of the *Daredevil* movie, he was involved and ended up being in the film. He had wonderful stories to tell about one of those experiences, so I told him to use one of those stories. 'I know that it happened to you: It is real-life; it is not some crazy hard-bitten crime character; but so what?'"

Schutz has different autobiographical anthologies planned for release in the ensuing two years. In 2004, her plan is to do an anthology like *Autobiographix* but with an all-female creative cast — and for 2005 she plans on an anthology of real-life love stories. ✦

CONFIRMED SHIPPING

They're out there: We have received confirmation that the following titles have shipped and should be available in stores. This reflects shipping information received through December 5:

Abstract Studios: *Strangers In Paradise Vol. III* #61, $2.95 (Sep)

Airwave Comics: *Suicide Blonde* #2, $7.95 (Dec)

Alternative Comics: *Peanutbutter & Jeremy's Best Book Ever TP*, $14.95 (Nov)

Amaze Ink (Slave Labor Graphics): *Bear* #3, $2.95 (Dec)
Chi TP Vol. 1, $8.95 (Dec)
Chimney 25, $3.95 (Dec)
Halo & Sprocket Vol. 1: TP Welcome To Humanity, $12.95 (Dec)
Outlook: Grim #3, $2.95 (Dec)

Angry Naked Comics: *Patchouli One-Shot*, $3.95 (Dec)

Antarctic Press: *Luftwaffe 1946* #14, $5.95 (Nov)
Neotopia Vol. 2 #4, $2.99 (Oct)
Shoujo #4, $5.95 (Dec)

Archie Comic Publications: *Archie* #543, $2.19 (Nov. 30-Dec. 6)
Laugh Digest #189, $2.39 (Nov. 30-Dec. 6)
Veronica #147, $2.19 (Nov. 30-Dec. 6)

C.A.M. Press: *Spark Generators Vol. 2 TP*, $13.95 (Dec)

Centurion Premiere/Hoodoo Graphics: *21st Centurions* #0, (two covers 7.95)

Claypool Comics: *Deadbeats* #62, $2.50 (Oct)

Comicsone.Com: *Crayon Shin-Chan GN* #6, $9.95 (Nov)
Red Prowling Devil GN #6, $9.95 (Nov)
Saint Legend GN #6, $13.95 (Sep)
Shaolin Soccer GN #2, $13.95 (Nov)
Storm Riders Part 2: Invading Sun Vol. 1 TP, $9.95 (Dec)
Story of Tao GN #6, $14.95 (Nov)

CPM Manga: *Record of Lodoss War: Lady of Pharis Collectors Ed Book 1*, $15.95 (Nov. 23-29)
Slayers Super-Explosive Demon Story Vol. 3 TP, $15.95 (Dec)
Urotsukidoji Book 6: Reincarnation, $16.95 (Oct. 12-18)

CrossGen: *Masters of the Universe Season One Encyclopedia* #1, $2.95 (Dec)
Meridian #41, $2.95 (Nov)
Ruse #26, $2.95 (Nov)

Dark Horse: *Autobiographix TP*, $14.95 (Nov. 16-22)
Crush #2, $2.99 (Nov. 23-29)
Hellsing Vol. 1 TP, $13.95 (Nov. 30-Dec. 6)
Star Wars: Infinities-Return of the Jedi #1, $2.99 (Nov. 9-15)
Star Wars: Jedi-Dooku Clone Wars Special, $4.99 (Oct. 26-Nov. 1)

DC Comics: *Action Comics* #810, $2.25 (Nov. 30-Dec. 6)
Authority Vol. 2 #8, $2.95 (Nov. 30-Dec. 6)
Bad Girls #5, $2.50 (Nov. 30-Dec. 6)
Batman: City of Light #3, $2.95 (Nov. 30-Dec. 6)
Batman: Hush Vol. 2 HC, $19.95 (Nov. 30-Dec. 6)
Detective Comics #789, $2.75 (Nov. 30-Dec. 6)
Formerly Known As The Justice League #6, $2.50 (Nov. 30-Dec. 6)
Hawkman #22, $2.50 (Nov. 30-Dec. 6)
JSA: All-Stars #8, $2.50 (Nov. 30-Dec. 6)
Justice League Adventures #26, $2.25 (Nov. 30-Dec. 6)
Looney Tunes #109, $2.25 (Nov. 30-Dec. 6)
Plastic Man #1, $2.50 (Nov. 30-Dec. 6)
Promethea #28, $2.95 (Oct. 19-25)
Superman Batman #4, $2.95 (Nov. 23-29)
T.H.U.N.D.E.R. Agents Archives Vol. 3 HC, $49.95 (Dec. 7-13)
Thundercats: Origins - Heroes and Villains #1, $3.50 (Nov. 30-Dec. 6)
Y: The Last Man #17, $2.95 (Nov. 30-Dec. 6)

Drawn & Quarterly: *The Fixer HC*, $24.95 (Nov)

Dreamchilde Press: *Quantum: Rock of Ages* #1, $2.99 (Dec)

Dreamwave: *Darkminds: Macropolis Vol. 2* #3, $2.95 (Dec)
Transformers More Than Meets Eye Official Guide #8, $5.25 (Nov)

Fantagraphics Books: *Housewives At Play* #11, $4.95 (Dec)
Megamanga Vol. 3: Co-Ed Sexxtasy TP, $16.95 (Nov)
Megamanga Vol. 4: Slut Girl TP, $15.95 (Nov)
Sex Warrior Isane #4, $3.50 (Dec)
Small Favors #8, $4.95 (Sep)

Gemstone Publishing: *Donald Duck Adventures Vol. 3 TP*, $7.95 (Nov. 30-Dec. 6)

I Books: *Bloody Streets of Paris TP*, $17.95 (Nov)

IDW Publishing: *CSI: Bad Rap* #4, $3.99 (Nov)
Wake the Dead #2, $3.99 (Nov)

Image Comics: *Battle of the Planets: Destroy All Monsters Vol. 3 TP*, $19.99 (Nov)
G.I. Joe Transformers #5, (two covers $2.95) (Oct. 19-25)
Noble Causes Distant Relatives #4, $2.95 (Oct. 19-25)
Paradigm #12, $3.50 (Sep 14-20)

Kenzer & Company: *Dungeons & Dragons: Where Shadows Fall* #3, $3.50 (Oct)
Knights of the Dinner Table #86, $3.99 (Dec)
Knights of the Dinner Table: Illustrated #29, $2.99 (Dec)

Marvel Comics: *Captain America* #21, $2.99 (Dec. 14-20)
Crew #7, $2.99 (Nov. 2-8)
Crimson Dynamo #4, $2.50 (Nov. 23-29)
Elektra #30, $2.99 (Nov. 30-Dec. 6)
Eternal #6, $2.99 (Nov. 30-Dec. 6)
Exiles #38, $2.99 (Nov. 30-Dec. 6)
Incredible Hulk #64, $2.25 (Nov. 30-Dec. 6)
Sentinel #10, $2.99 (Nov. 30-Dec. 6)
Spider-Girl #67, $2.99 (Nov. 30-Dec. 6)
Supreme Power #5, $2.99 (Nov. 30-Dec. 6)
Thanos #3, $2.99 (Nov. 30-Dec. 6)
Ultimate Spider-Man #50, $2.99 (Nov. 30-Dec. 6)
Ultimates #12, $2.25 (Sep. 21-27)
X-Men Legends Vol. 4: Hated & Feared TP, $19.99 (Nov. 30-Dec. 6)
X-Treme X-Men #35, $2.99 (Nov. 23-29)

Moonstone: *Mr. Keen: Tracer of Lost Persons* #2, $2.95 (Nov)

Radio Comix: *Furrlough* #130, $2.99 (Oct)
Genus #62, $3.50 (Oct)
Liberty From Hell #2, $2.99 (Oct)

Red Robot Productions: *Malinky Robot* #1, $3.00 (Dec)

Shooting Star Comics: *Job Wanted* #1, $5.95 (Dec)

Sirius Entertainment: *Poison Elves* #75, $2.95 (Oct)

Studio G: *Rakan* #1, $2.95 (Oct)

TokyoPop: *Battle Royale Vol. 4 GN*, $9.99 (Nov. 9-15)
Dot Hack Sign Vol. 2 GN, $9.99 (Nov. 2-8)
Jing King of Bandits Vol. 3 GN (of 7), $9.99 (Oct. 12-18)
Kare Kano Vol. 6 GN, $9.99 (Nov. 9-15)
Peach Girl: Change of Heart Vol. 5 TP, $9.99 (Nov. 9-15)
Rave Master Vol. 6 GN, $9.99 (Dec. 14-20)
Shirahime Syo Snow Goddess Tales HC, $19.99 (Dec. 14-20)

Viper Comics: *Dead At 17* #2, $2.95 (Dec)

Viz: *Animerica December 2003 Vol. 11* #12, $4.95 (Nov. 30-Dec. 6)

White Lightning Productions: *Bootleg* #9, $3.95 (Aug)

Recapturing childhood

Playing Mantis offers collectors blasts from the past

By **Brent Frankenhoff**

Fans longing to reclaim part of their childhood who hesitate to pay the high collector prices for original toys will find that Playing Mantis is one company that makes recapturing memories affordable. With its reproductions of Johnny Lightning die-cast cars, an assortment of 1960s model kits, and, now, a line of Marvel Flicker Rings that improve on the original vending-machine products of the Silver Age, the company keeps collectors saying, "Wow! I remember having one of those!"

Lightning strikes. Started in 1993 by entrepreneur Tom Lowe, Playing Mantis was named as a play on his favorite insect. Its first releases were reproductions of Johnny Lightning die-cast cars that Lowe remembered from his own childhood. When he discovered that Topper, the company that originally produced Johnny Lightning cars, had folded in 1971 and the Johnny Lightning name was available, he acquired eight vintage cars, sent them to China for reproduction, and released the first line of cars in January 1994. In the years since, the company has released dozens of cars and expanded into other areas — including TV and movies with its Hollywood on Wheels line, which includes cars based on vehicles from such shows as *The Brady Bunch* and *The Partridge Family* as well as *The Simpsons* and *Scooby-Doo*. In addition, several cars featuring art from Marvel comics have also been released. According to Johnny Lightning Marketing Director Jeff Penney, the art needs determine what type of vehicle is used. "I'd like to say there's a great science to this," he told ***CBG***, "but we look at the cover art and determine how much space we need to show the complete cover on a car. That's why you'll see a lot of vans and panel delivery trucks. Fortunately, we can draw art from any era in Marvel's history. There are no restrictions on what art we use from each era; it just has to have a historical reference."

Upcoming releases in the Johnny Lightning line include a Toys "R" Us exclusive line of six Spider-Man cars in the first quarter of 2004 and, Penney added, "In April, we have 12 other Spider-Man cars coming out to the mass market. For this release, we've looked at some different vehicles, including a Tucker, a rare car from the 1940s. In addition, we're putting one of our Spider-Man images on a Lincoln Futura."

Flickering fun. Playing Mantis' Marvel license extends to its latest product, a line of Marvel Flicker Rings. Based on the plastic rings of the 1950s and 1960s that had small attached lenticular animation pieces, Playing Mantis' line upgrades the concept, while recalling the originals for collectors. Lenticular animation stacks two (sometimes more) images on a card that, when moved, makes one image come into focus while making the other disappear, giving the illusion of movement. According to Product Development Director Bob Plant, the rings were another brainchild of Lowe's. "About four and a half years ago," Plant told ***CBG***, "Tom brought out some vintage flicker rings he had bought, and, while some of us realized there was a collector base for them and he felt there was a market for them, the project kept getting put on the back burner, while we concentrated on other ideas. Tom was stubborn, and finally someone said, 'Let's try it.' Our approach was to upgrade from the generic plastic, chromed rings to metal rings with character sculpts on the sides. Our vendor in China tried different metals for the rings and we allowed them plenty of time to develop the line correctly."

Prototypes were shown this past summer at Comic-Con International: San Diego, where Plant said they received much positive response.

The initial line has 12 different lenticular images: six featuring Spider-Man, one Cyclops, one Wolverine, two Hulk designs, and two Daredevil designs. While the Spider-Man line has two different ring sculpts — one with a full figure, the other with just Spider-Man's head — the other ring sets have a single sculpt each, with Cyclops and Wolverine sharing the X-Men sculpt. "In addition," Plant added, "there's a dark wipe on the rings to bring out detail and a clear varnish on top of that."

Each ring comes with its own stand that, Plant said, "recalls the original capsules the rings came in, back in the '60s." The weighted spherical stand has a frame extending from its top with a special 2x3-inch lenticular piece all its own. The weighted sphere wobbles back and forth when flicked, effectively "activating" the lenticular image.

Look how the toys glow. In addition to the new Marvel Flicker Rings, Plant also oversees Playing Mantis' line of figures based on *Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer*, a line he said everyone at the company loves. "I wasn't the only one bugging Tom to do a Rudolph line," he said, adding that the company's involvement began the second year that CVS produced a line of beanbag figures. "We developed a line of clip-on items that sold out, thus bolstering our confidence in the property," he said.

From action figures based on the major characters from the animated special, Playing Mantis expanded the line with a series of "Ultimate" figures: larger versions of several characters. "We launched the line with Ultimate Abominable," Plant said. "We wanted an Abominable in scale with the action figures. Ultimate Santa and Ultimate Rudolph were also naturals."

Joining the line this year is an Ultimate Charlie in the Box from the Island of Misfit Toys. In addition to a voicechip with five phrases from the show, Charlie has a motion-detector sentry function in which he says, "Halt! Who goes there?" when activated. "Tom was behind this figure," Plant said, "and wanted a full-sized Charlie in the Box. We also track consumer interest and sales during the holiday season, and that helps determine which figures will get the Ultimate treatment."

While it would seem that development of the figures would be easy, since they were based on animated characters that started out as three-dimensional puppets, Plant said that development and production time on each year's line begins more than a year earlier. "We'd like even more time, but it doesn't always work that way," he added.

Building dreams. Playing Mantis' line of reproductions extends to model kits through its Polar Lights imprint. According to Brand Manager David Metzner, the line began with reproductions of the Universal Movie Monster kits originally produced by Aurora in the 1960s. The line expanded with reproductions of Aurora's Spider-Man and Hulk kits, which Metzner said the company resized to bring them in line with the Monster kits. "The Spider-Man and Hulk comic kits were originally 1/12th scale," he told ***CBG***, "and the Monster kits were 1/8th scale and the other original comics kits featuring such characters as Superman were also 1/8th scale, so we brought the Spider-Man and Hulk kits up to 1/8th, as well."

In addition to the Marvel characters, Polar Lights has produced a line of models featuring various Batvehicles, including two Batmobiles, a Bat-Gyro, and a Batplane. Another vehicle line has just been released, featuring four snap-together car kits with six different comics characters designs on them — three featuring Spider-Man, two with The Hulk, and one with Captain America. ✦

Win Playing Mantis products

Excited about the Marvel Flicker Rings? Here's *your* chance to win a set of six different designs! Just write your name and address along with the answer to "What comics-related item would you like to see Playing Mantis produce?" on a postcard and mail it to: Playing Mantis Contest, c/o *Comics Buyer's Guide* Editorial, 700 E. State St., Iola, WI 54990

Only one entry per household. The deadline for entries is Jan. 12. Five winners will be chosen and announced in ***CBG*** #1578. Entries will also be accepted online at *http://surveys/?id=228*.

In addition, ***CBG***'s sister publication *Toy Shop* will give away five Charlies in the Box. To enter this *separate* contest, which also deadlines Jan. 12, put your name and address on a postcard and send it to *Toy Shop* Playing Mantis Giveaway, 700 E. State St., Iola, WI 54990.

Dredd(ed) reviews

Comics from across the pond make it across Tony's desk along with some U.S. releases

By **Tony Isabella**

Count me in with the worried, unprotected masses. A world that's sufficiently scarred and scoured to require [bomb shelters] will need to soldier on without me. In this eerily still and lifeless room, listening to my heartbeat, it occurs to me that each person is allotted a finite store of time, energy, and money. Every hour, calorie, or dollar expended to build a shelter like this is an hour, calorie, or dollar that can't be devoted to crafting the kind of world that doesn't need them. I wonder if these places might ever constitute self-fulfilling prophecies. What if, even in a small way, they have the same effect on peacemaking that a pre-nup has on a marriage, silently sabotaging the requisite optimism?

*— **Brad Lemley**, writing in **Discover** (October 2003)*

Reader Earl Carl sent me the above quote, fearing it would be too long for me to use. However, this being the holiday season and all, I trusted you and my editors would indulge me in this and in the comments that follow.

Optimism appears to be in precious short supply this Christmas, and it doesn't take more than a flip through your local newspapers or a few minutes in front of CNN to understand why. Yet those same conduits of current information can also be used to transmit tales of hope for the future.

Let me tell you about Brandon Biggs.

Biggs, 20, is the son of the late Gregory Biggs. His father was the homeless bricklayer who was hit by a car driven by Chante Mallard in October 2001.

Mallard drove away with Gregory Biggs stuck in her windshield, drove away, even as he moaned for help, drove to her garage and left him pinned, his torso inside the car and his broken legs lodged in the glass. He bled to death there. Mallard dumped his body in a park and went on with her life — until she was caught, convicted of murder, and sentenced to 50 years in prison.

At Mallard's trial, Brandon Biggs spoke of his father, a good-hearted and hard-working man who had been diagnosed with bipolar disorder and mild schizophrenia. Gregory's own generosity had led to the loss of his truck, his job as a self-employed bricklayer, and his home; he was living in a shelter at the time of his death but tried to keep in touch with his son.

After speaking of his dad, Brandon did something remarkable. He told the court he forgave Mallard and would keep her and her family in his prayers. He knew her family was losing a daughter, as he had lost his father.

The story becomes more remarkable. Fred Moor, a parishioner at St. Rose Catholic Church in Perrysburg, Ohio, was moved by the young man's forgiveness of his father's murderer. Moor's church helped to start and supports *Compassion*, a newsletter written by and for death row inmates. The newsletter, a project of the Catholic Church's peace and justice committee, attempts to put a human face to death row, giving inmates a place for contemplation and a forum from which to encourage reconciliation.

The inmates have founded a scholarship fund for the children of murder victims. The scholarships are not meant to atone for the loss the families of the victims have suffered; they are meant as a gift of compassion for those families.

Moor encouraged Brandon, a sophomore at Southwestern Assembly of God University in Waxahachie, Texas, to apply for the *Compassion* scholarship. Biggs was presented with a $10,000 scholarship, the third awarded by the newsletter.

In an essay published in *Compassion,* Brandon gave his answer to the question of how he could forgive Mallard:

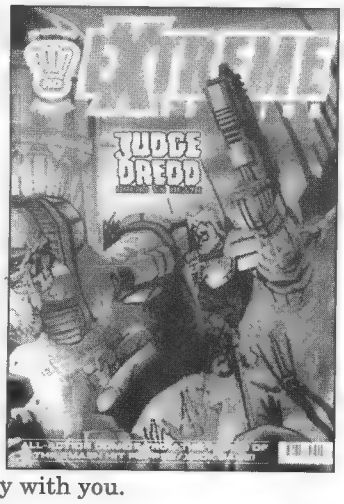
"I have had many feelings towards the individual who murdered my father, but every time the press would ask me how I felt about the individual, I told them that more than anything, what I felt was forgiveness and compassion. I have come to understand that it is really not about me any more, but that God has a bigger picture in mind. The loss of my father has affected me in many ways, both positively and negatively. But I can't afford to live in anger and unforgiveness."

If you chose to deem Brandon's actions and statements heroic, I wouldn't disagree with you. However, I trust you'll excuse me if I think of them as ... human.

It's the kind of humanity to which we all can aspire, whether we are lords of the state, prisoners of the state, or citizens of the state. It's the kind of humanity, especially in one so young, that gives us blessed optimism for the future.

Hope. The perfect gift for this holiday season.

Let's start this week's reviews with ***2000 AD Extreme Edition* #1** (Rebellion, $10.99). This is the first in a quarterly series of specials dedicated to particular *2000 AD* characters or themes. For this debut, and to coincide with the release of the *Judge Dredd vs. Judge Death* computer game, we get: a trio of previously unreprinted stories showcasing the creature to whom life itself is the greatest crime of all; heavily illustrated text articles on the creation of the new computer game and the history of Judge Death; and a fourth "story" that is actually a game in comics format.



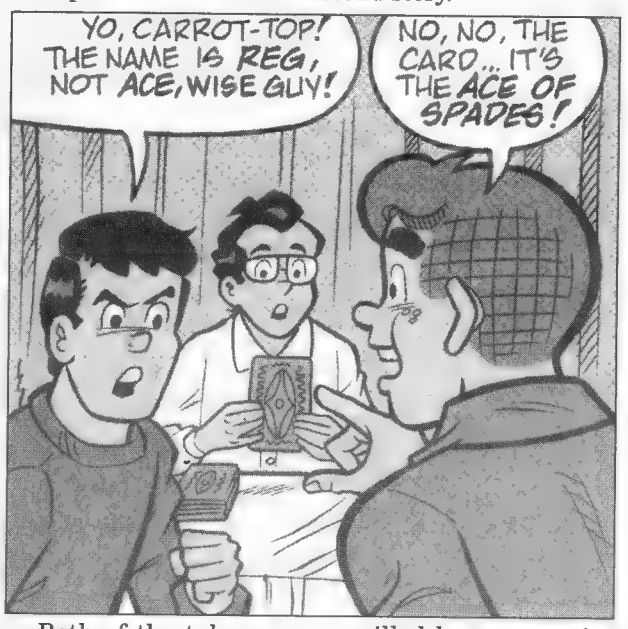
The highlight of this extreme edition is "Dead Reckoning," a 42-page thriller by writer John Wagner and artist Greg Staples. In pursuit of an escaped Death, Dredd ends up in the past and in the terrifying home dimension of his quarry. Wagner's shorter stories, drawn by Ron Smith and Ian Gibson, are entertaining, but it's "Dead Reckoning" that will stay with you.

Also worth noting: The "You Are Judge Dredd" game/story, first published in the short-lived *Dice Man* magazine, is a collaboration between Wagner and Alan Grant (story), Pat Mills (game), and Bryan Talbot (art). I played the game myself and kind of sort of died.

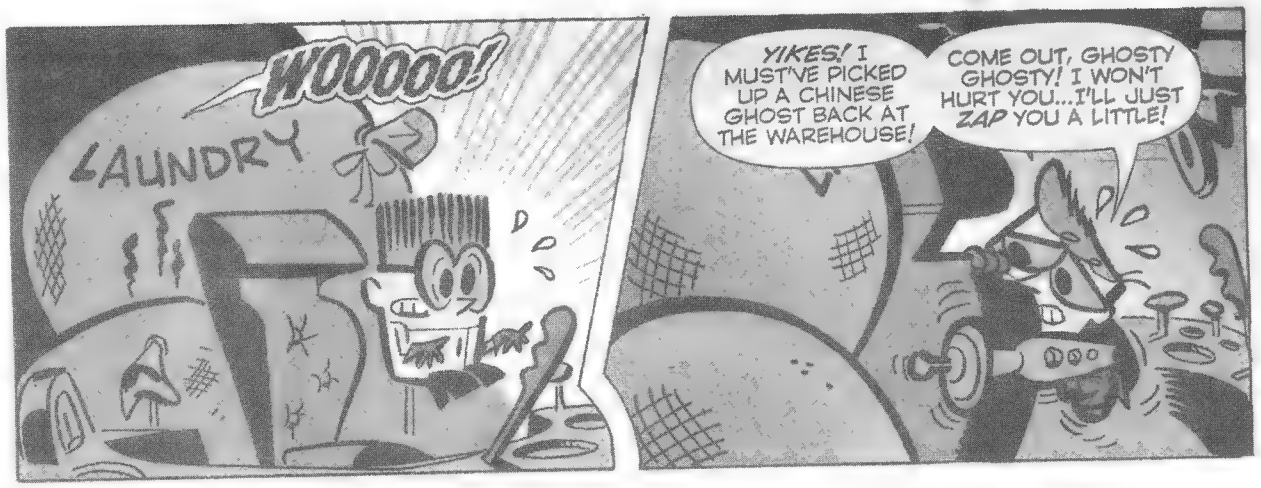
Thank Grud it was only a comic book!

2000 AD Extreme Edition #1 was good for hours of fearful fun. On our scale of zero to five, it gets four Tonys.

***Archie & Friends* #77** (Archie, $2.19) is an amusing diversion. Writer Mike Pellowski explores Archie's latent ESP in "Mind Games" and pokes fun at super-hero movies in a second story.



Both of the tales were pencilled by cover artist Rex Lindsey and inked by Rich Koslowski. Lindsey and Koslowski also provided visuals for a Josie and the Pussycats tale by writer Angelo Decasare. Add a couple of single-page gag strips and text features and you have a pleasant comic book — which lacked even one story that could truly have been said to stand out. The best I can do here is two Tonys.


WOOOOO!
LAUNDRY
YIKES! I MUST'VE PICKED UP A CHINESE GHOST BACK AT THE WAREHOUSE!
COME OUT, GHOSTY GHOSTY! I WON'T HURT YOU...I'LL JUST ZAP YOU A LITTLE!

***Cartoon Cartoons* #23** (DC, $2.25) plays to a slightly younger, slightly hipper crowd than the Archie comics. I love the Bill Wray cover but I fear the figure of Dexter (from "Dexter's Laboratory") doesn't catch the eye as well as it might.

There are three interior stories. "Sunken Leisure" by Robbie Busch is the Dexter tale wherein the boy genius retrieves a package from the deep blue. It's loads of silly fun with terrific layouts by Stephen DeStefano and finishes by Wray.

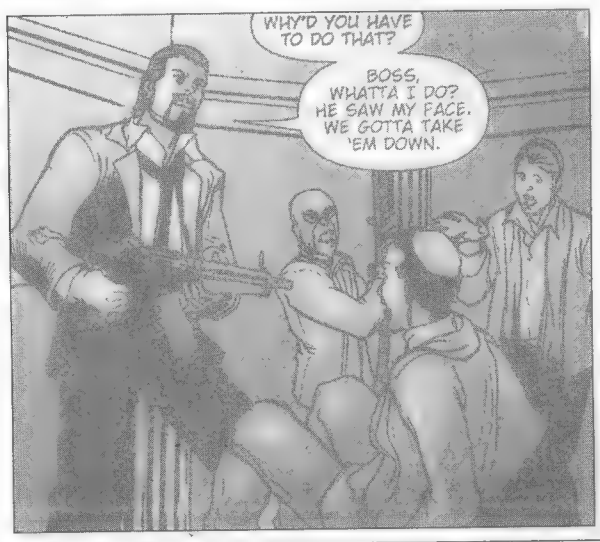
An alien device threatens Courage the Cowardly Dog, his home, and his owners in "Tin Machine" by writer Jim Alexander, penciller Enis Temizel, and inker Tim Chilly. I thought it was another fun story, which is saying something, coming from a guy who doesn't care for the Courage cartoons.

Two out of three ain't bad. The "I Am Weasel" tale that finishes off the issue is as tedious as the "I Am Weasel" cartoons. I guess that could be a plus, if you like them.

Cartoon Cartoons #23 picks up three Tonys. The Dexter cover and story make up for the "Weasel" yawner.

Gene Pool (IDW Publishing, $6.99) is basically an introduction to the characters who will appear in the Gene Pool movie. Written by creators Marv Wolfman and Len Wein, the comic book is a solid, occasionally surprising super-team premiere. However, for the most part, it's nothing we haven't seen before, though I can readily see why it was snapped up by Hollywood. Think a scaled-down *X-Men* and you're in the right ballpark.

There are things I love about the book. Its young heroes have this in common: As infants, they were doomed to early death because of their genetic defects. Their survival and powers stem from the work of a visionary scientist. I'm a big fan of movie scientists actually doing good.



I like four of the five characters we've met so far. My pals Marv and Len did a great job making them individuals and basically likeable.

I'm also a big fan of heroes I can like without excusing their brutality or skewed morality. OK, yeah, one of the teens is a crook, but there are mitigating circumstances.

One of the characters has multiple personalities, and each of the personalities has a different power. That could be fun, should an ongoing series follow this intro issue.

Now for the things I don't love so much.

Penciller Steven Cummings shows promise. However, some of his figures are awkward and stiff. Some of his transitions are even more so, but those might be the fault of the script, which itself gets a little choppy in places.

Samantha Chase, the daughter of the scientist mentioned above, appears briefly — *too* briefly. She doesn't come alive as do the other characters. If she's going to play a larger part in subsequent issues, she needs personality work.

Mysterious masked mercenaries are hunting the super-teens for some unknown organization. If I made a drinking game out of super-hero clichés, that one would have me blotto on my behind within an hour. Make it go away. Please.

Gene Pool has more good than not-so-good, so I'm awarding it four Tonys. I want to see Wolfman and Wein do more issues.

I also want to see them get stinking rich off the movie, because the guys who created (or co-created) Blade, the New Teen Titans, Swamp Thing, Wolverine, Storm, and Nightcrawler should make as much money for themselves as they made for DC and Marvel.

Catching up on the ***Judge Dredd Megazine*** (Rebellion, $10.99), here's a quick look at issues #209-211.

Dredd does a bit of traveling in the lead stories. The first two issues find him teaming with a former foe in Hong Kong, while the third kicks off a tale of a Nazi-like army in the Cursed Earth.

Writer Gordon Rennie does a fine job, as do artists Patrick Goddard and Dylan Teague (on the Hong Kong adventure) and Dredd co-creator Carlos Ezquerra on the current serial.

Judge Death is wandering through the Cursed

4 NEW STORIES! DREDD IN HONG TONG DEATH ON THE ROAD THE GENERATION HUNTER XTINCT
PLUS HARRY 20 DEVLIN WAUGH HOW BRITISH COMICS WON WWII
MEG 209
28 AUG 2003
JUDGE ☆ DREDD
MEGAZINE
JUDGE DEATH IS THE HITCHER FROM HELL!

Earth in a serial by John Wagner and artist Frazer Irving. It's not top-of-the-line stuff but it has its moments.

Every time I think writer John Smith and artist Colin MacNeil can't possibly drag out the dismal Devlin Waugh serial any longer, they do. The high concept of a gay vampire working for the Vatican can't carry this one. Stake it, already.

The classic reprints are usually my favorite features. These issues see the conclusion of the controversial "Darkie's Mob" tales of renegade soldiers fighting the Japanese behind enemy lines and the beginnings of "Charley's War," the gripping saga of a young man in the First World War.

Then, there's "Harry 20 on the High Rock" by writer Gerry Finley-Day and artist Alan Davis; it's about a man sentenced to hard time on a floating space prison for the crime of feeding the hungry. It's as intense as the war stories.

These issues also saw the return of "The Bendatti Vendetta," a grim-but-intriguing series about assassins targeting killers whom the law can't touch, and the debut of "Xtinct," an uneven, not very interesting series set in the far future, where the last remaining humans are killing one another with the gory aid of the intelligent dinosaurs they've created.

You can also count on the *Megazine* for informative articles on British comics. Currently, we're getting the story of *Battle*, the weekly that launched "Charley's War" and "Darkie's Mob."

Each new chapter makes me wish I could read a stack of the original issues.

Maybe it's time to hit eBay.

Judge Dredd Megazine ain't cheap but it delivers good value for its cost. It definitely rates four Tonys. ✦

***Tony's Tips** is © 2003 Tony Isabella. Comments on this column or review items for future columns should be sent to Tony at: Tony's Tips, P.O. Box 1502, Medina, OH 44258.*

*You can also e-mail Tony at: **tonyisa@ohio.net**.*

Byeeeeeee

It's time again for *Canceled Comics Cavalcade*

Dear Captain ...

By **Andrew Smith**

It's time once again for Canceled Comics Cavalcade, our regular examination of defunct funnybooks, to see what lessons, if any, we can learn. But, before we get to this month's dead soldiers, let's hear Legionnaire comments about past CCCs:

John Cothran *of* ***San Ramon, Calif.****, writes:*

I'm a little behind (two months) in my ***CBG*** reading and just finished your column in #1558, "A postmortem set of views." In particular, I was relieved to see that your take on *Automatic Kafka* was very similar to my own.

When I first heard that Joe Casey and Ashley Wood were collaborating on a comic book, I was very excited. I've been a fan of both for some time. After reading the first issue I was ... *confused.* So I read it again. Still confused. I'm 40something and thought, as you did, apparently, that perhaps I was just too old and un-hip to understand it.

At that time, I had a job that allowed me a lot of free time to visit and post on message boards. So I started a thread that basically asked (*re: Automatic Kafka*), "What the heck was that all about?" The replies went basically like this: "What the heck is up with *you*? This comic is pure genius! I'm sorry you can't understand the symbolism in the book. This is the 'anti-comic,' yadda yadda ..." and more of the same. Basically, I was gang-chastised for not understanding *AK* #1.

So I gave it a chance, read #2 (confused), #3 (confused), and then gave up — thinking I'm just an old fogy — and went back to my Batman and Superman books.

I, too, appreciate the effort Casey and Wood made to produce something non-mainstream and experimental, but I think they just went a tad too far.

Anyway, thanks for making an old fogy feel good. I guess I *do* know a good comic book when I see it.

THIS IS THE KIND OF PLACE WHERE ANYTHING CAN HAPPEN. THE REALM OF THE UNEXPLAINABLE. THE WOMB OF THE IMPERCEPTIBLE. I'M JUST A HUMBLE SERVANT.
YOUR GUIDE INTO THE UNKNOWN.
IT'S... A COMICBOOK STORE...?

The Captain *replies*:

Yeah, John, it did occur to me that I was possibly too "un-hip" to get *Automatic Kafka*. I don't think that's the case, but it doesn't really matter — if I wasn't enjoying it, I wasn't enjoying it. That's reason enough to stop buying it.

Since the book was canceled, I can only assume a goodly number of other fans came to a similar conclusion.

John Genduso *of* ***Fallbrook, Calif.****, writes:*

Just read your column about Future Comics' new TPB-only strategy. I have to say that I was really confused by Bob Layton's comments on the subject. The Future books that I have read were mediocre at best. If the books were better, they would have sold better. The poor sales had nothing to do with the format. So Future's strategy seems to be: "No one is buying our mediocre monthly books, so let's start selling more expensive mediocre TPBs." Huh? I don't see the logic.

The American market will never be like the European market. In America, we like our monthly books. Monthlies are collectibles. TPBs are not. Monthlies also give us a chance to sample a series at a lower price before we decide to make a bigger financial commitment to a TPB.

The answer to Future's problem is simple. They needed more talent working on their books. Better stories. Groundbreaking concepts and brilliant art. Instead, we got a Valiant rehash. (That might have worked better if Jim Shooter had been in charge.) *Deathmask* is *Shadowman*. *Metallix* is *X-O Manowar*. *Freemind* is *Solar*. *Peacekeeper* was ... hey, doesn't DC already *have* a Peacekeeper character?

Don't get me wrong, I have a lot of respect for the guys behind Future and I would have liked to see them succeed. However, I know that discerning fans like me are not going to plunk down $20 of our money for these TPBs until Alan Moore writes them and Brian Hitch draws them.

And, in case someone doing market research for a comics company happens to read this letter, I would like to state for the record: "I love monthly comic books and I will continue to remain loyal to them."

The Captain *replies:*

For the record, the DC character you're thinking about is Peace*maker*, formerly a Charlton property.

As to your other remarks, I have a lot of respect for the Future team (David Michelinie, Dick Giordano, and Bob Layton). And, while I was only a lukewarm fan of the Future properties, I did buy and read them — surely the acid test.

But, whether or not they were "mediocre," sales would indicate that too few people were willing to join me in shelling out bucks for the books. Which, I'm sorry to say, lends even more weight to your later argument, that the TPBs will likely face more antipathy than the monthlies. I wish Future the best of luck, but I fear it's facing an uphill battle.

And, speaking of start-up companies in trouble:

A few weeks ago, I mentioned that it took three years for CrossGen Entertainment to pull the plug on a monthly: *The First*. Sadly, it's more than made up for lost time since.

Meridian #44, *Path* #23, *Scion* #44, *Crux* #33, *Mystic* #43, *Ruse* #26, *Sigil* #43, and *Solus* #8 were all announced as final issues a few weeks ago. Even more disturbing, *Sigil* has been retroactively canceled back to #42. The last issue will only appear online in script format.

Ouch.

Originally, CrossGen Publisher Mark Alessi and cocreator Gina Villa had a five-year plan for their shared-universe books. After five years, some books would be canceled and some would change focus. To that end, book titles weren't eponymous — a title like *Mystic* or *Scion* could change protagonists (or even planets) without skipping a beat.

But that five-year plan has been truncated to three. Ouch, again.

Coming soon is a storyline called "The War" that'll reveal the mysteries of the "sigils" that bound many of these books together (usually on a subtextual level) and wrap up the existing storylines. Two sigil series will continue (*Sojourn* and *Negation*) as will the bulk of the non-sigil books (*Way of the Rat, El Cazador, Route 666, Brath, Lady Death*). And two *new* books, *Kiss Kiss Bang Bang* and Mike Ploog's *Abadazad*, are making their debuts soon.

But at a stroke, CrossGen's output has been cut roughly in half. Coming on the heels of a wave of grim

news from CGE — including a lot of missed ship dates, wholesale layoffs, financial restructurings, and rumblings of freelancers going unpaid — it doesn't take a rocket scientist to put two and two together. CrossGen's in trouble, although whether it's the fatal kind of trouble is hard to say.

Which is a darn shame. I've watched a lot of ambitious start-ups in the last four decades — First, Pacific, Warp, Continuity, Valiant, Acclaim, Defiant, Malibu, Tekno*Comix, Broadway, *etc., etc.* — but CrossGen was the first that just blew me away crack out of the box. I *loved* its books — not as a replacement for my beloved super-heroes, but as a supplement. Virtually every CGE book offered a genre long ignored or overlooked by American publishers, and the arrival of CrossGen made me feel as if comics were capable of anything, including respect from outside the industry.

Moreover, I admired CrossGen for tackling the big problems fans and pros alike have complained about since the invention of dirt: distribution bottlenecks, a shrinking fan base, lack of attention from the mainstream press, rotating creative teams, late ships, *ad nauseam*. Alessi addressed every one of them with an aggressive and wholly practical business plan.

A business plan? In comics? What a concept!

I was also impressed that CGE tried to drag the industry kicking and screaming into the 21st century. I never understood why online message boards were so negative about Alessi's hiring practices ... because they were *normal* for any industry outside of comics, an industry that somehow has managed to perpetuate a Depression-era mentality and plantation system far past the expiration date. When CGE announced it was hiring creators as employees instead of as freelancers, complete with benefits and retirement, I nodded with approval. We've seen the sorry sagas of Siegel and Shuster, Jack Kirby, and a raft of other abused creators far too often in this business. Alessi was going to change that.

This new system didn't sit well with the big publishers, who currently can cherry-pick super-stars with big contracts, while treating less-popular writers and artists, and low-profile creators like letterers, inkers, colorists, and the like, as indentured servants. And the big boys were free from the financial burden of benefits for many of their freelance contributors, which any businessman will tell you is a monstrous drain on company resources — but any employee will tell you allows one to maintain a decent life, financial stability, and a little dignity.

Nevertheless, the online boards were full of venom against CGE that I never understood. Peter David, in one of his columns, remarked on the savagery of the attacks on CrossGen, and I've seen it, too. It was far beyond anything I'd experienced *vis-à-vis* other start-ups and *way* out of proportion to any poster's dislike of a given title. It was virtually personal — should some CrossGen fan poke his head out of his foxhole and offer that he actually liked some of the books, the response was immediate and vicious — he or she would be called a "CrossGen cultist" and worse, and, before long, few were daring the wrath of the Internet trolls outside of CrossGen's own boards and The Captain's website.

One Legionnaire offered an opinion as to why this may be: He compared it to sports fans. If you're a Chicago Cubs fan, you might not be particularly kind to a St. Louis Cardinals fan (or vice versa), particularly when shielded by the anonymity of the Internet. If you're a Marvel fan, this Legionnaire opined, you might actually see CrossGen as a threat — to your "team" and to yourself personally, since it might bring into question your own purchasing decisions and tastes. Thus, the brutal, and personal, nature of the trollery.

Maybe so, maybe no. But it's the best explanation I've heard so far.

So maybe the trolls have won — maybe they won't have CrossGen to kick around any more, if current trends continue.

But I'm still optimistic. Alessi is a canny businessman and he's demonstrably a fighter. If anyone in comics publishing today can pull himself off the mat, it's probably he. So I'm looking forward to more *Sojourn*, more *Way of the Rat*, more innovations from the most innovative company to come down the pike in my lifetime.

But we've probably seen the last of some genres CrossGen resurrected — and of benefits for many creators. Again, I just find that a damn shame.

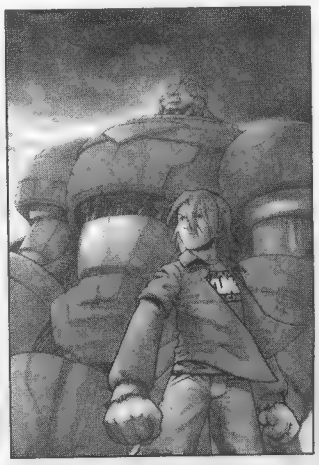
Meanwhile ...

• *Sweatshop* #6, which has already shipped, was the final issue.

I'm not much of a Peter Bagge fan. That's no knock on Bagge or on those who like his style. But his art is so distinctive and personal that it inspires love or loathing — almost nobody reacts with a shrug. In my case, I don't care for it. Which is strictly a matter of personal taste.

But I have to point to the art, because the storyline and characters in *Sweatshop* were well thought out and entertaining. I enjoyed the stories — I just couldn't get past the art, which I found unpalatable. I'm guessing I'm not alone; hence, adios *Sweatshop*.

• In an astonishing coincidence, the bulk of the Marvel titles championed by former publisher Bill Jemas are running into rough seas under the new regime. What a shock.

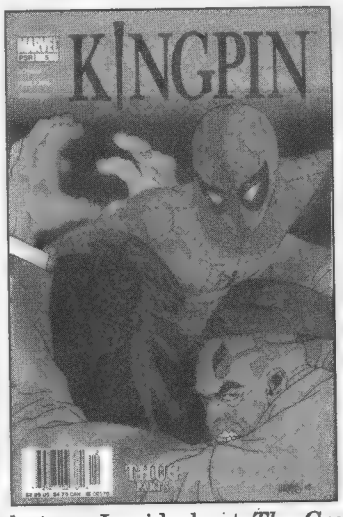


Two Tsunami books have foundered. *Namor* (co-written by Jemas and Andi Watson of *Breakfast after Noon*) and the manga-esque *Sentinel* both end with their 12th issues in February.

And the Epic line has been cut off at the knees. *Gun Theory* has been retroactively canceled with its second issue, out already. The remaining titles were to be shoehorned into an anthology — the kiss of death — although, with *Phantom Jack* jumping ship to another publisher, even that's up in the air.

All sarcasm aside, I have no inside information to support any assertion that the new NuMarvel is slitting the throat of projects from the old NuMarvel. A number of Jemas projects — such as the remainder of the Tsunami line — remains in place. I suspect that, if *Namor, Sentinel, Gun Theory,* and the rest had pulled in respectable numbers, they'd still be afloat.

But I don't think it's any leap of logic to guess that the books would have been given more rope under the old regime. That's not the case, they didn't have the numbers, and they're gone.



• Ditto *Kingpin*, with #7. I didn't have to be a fly on the wall at the editorial meeting that launched this series to guess that Marvel was hoping to ride the coattails of the *Daredevil* movie. Apparently, those coattails were mighty short, and *Kingpin* is kaput.

Which draws no tears from me. I was vaguely interested in some heretofore-undisclosed Marvel history, but, as I said about *The Crew*, I don't care for books about thugs, no matter the quality.

As I always say, if you don't like eggplant, it doesn't matter how you cook it — it's still eggplant. And *Kingpin* was eggplant.

• *Gen13* is our single entrant from DC this month, with #16 the final issue. Again, you'll see no tears from me.

The writer, Chris Claremont, made his reputation writing *X-Men*. The original *Gen13* made its reputation by basically regurgitating the X-Men premise, updated for a modern audience. So Claremont writing a re-launch of *Gen13* seemed a natural, if somewhat incestuous.

But *Gen13* also struck me as a photocopy of a photocopy of a photocopy. Whatever entertainment value was possible for me in this title was bled away by the inescapable feeling of *déjà vu*, that I'd read all this dialogue before, seen all these plots before. The names had changed, the powers had changed, but the shtick was tediously familiar.

I honestly don't ever want to see another Gen13 revival, any more than I want to see another monthly X-book. The needs of the X-fan market — and the potential of its collective wallet — are sufficiently covered at the moment, I think. ✦

Andrew Smith, who writes the ***Captain Comics*** *syndicated newspaper column, can be reached at* ***capncomics@aol.com*** *or on his message board,* ***www.captaincomics.us****.*

READING ROOM

Questions? Comments? Criticisms? Subpoenas?

Correspondence to CBG, 700 E. State St., Iola, WI 54990
or ohso@krause.com

Edison's Frankenstein 1910 — Comic Library International

$7.95, b/w, 64 pgs., available now
Writer: Chris Yambar; Artist: Robb Bihun
reviewed by **Jack Abramowitz**

Thomas Edison's *Frankenstein* is generally credited with being the first horror movie. It was *so* early that the genre had not yet been named. It faded from the public eye after the ascendance of Universal's 1931 classic and has only resurfaced in recent years.

This one-shot adapts the Edison version of *Frankenstein*, which differs in many ways from both Shelley's book and Universal's adaptation.

For starters, the monster is a creation of alchemy rather than a collection of corpses animated by electricity. (For Edison to suggest that electricity makes monsters would have been bad business sense.)

The ending is so much psychobabble that might work better on the screen than on the printed page, especially the screen of 1910 when psychobabble was still new.

Rounding out the package is a huge text section. While many comics could stand a page or two of text, this one may overdo it with 22 text pages. The text includes a history of Edison's *Frankenstein*, a comparison of the Edison and Universal versions, bios of the cast and crew of the film (and the comic book's creators), and more. While interesting, it may be a bit more than the average reader signed on for.

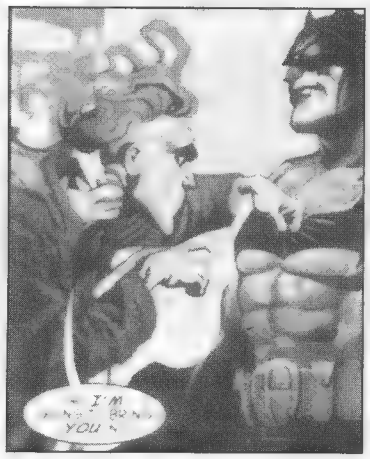
The package ends with increasingly emphatic pitches for Frederick C. Wiebel Jr.'s *Edison's Frankenstein* book and DVD set. Its lack of subtlety makes the reader feel, retroactively, as if he or she has just finished reading the comics equivalent of an "infomercial."

Edison's Frankenstein
Historical significance. | Unsubtle pitchmanship.
GRADE: B+

Batman/Joker: Switch #1 — DC

$6.95, color, 64 pgs., available now
Writer: Devin Grayson; Artist: John Bolton
reviewed by **Brett Weiss**

Written by bat-seasoned Devin Grayson (of *Nightwing* and *Batman: Gotham Knights* fame) from concepts put forth by artist John Bolton (*Batman: Man-Bat*), this prestige-format one-shot has interesting (if flawed) ideas, including putting The Clown Prince of Crime in the unlikely role of detective. The villain's clown-like mug has been disfigured (his trademark grin now resides on the back of his neck), and he must search the foggy streets of London for answers. The Dark Knight Detective does a little detective work of his own (with an assist from Oracle), and the beefy, bulky, Simon Bisley-style Batman uncovers decidedly ugly business.



The Joker, who is as pathetic here as he is dangerous, has an inner dialogue (lettered creepily by veteran Todd Klein) that gives readers insight into his warped, rambling, hyperactive mind. Batman's personality, on the other hand, is comparably underexposed, leaving fans of the character unsatisfied. The story as a whole is at once weirdly hallucinogenic (what's with the mouth on the back of the neck?) and prosaically by-the-numbers (newspaper articles help clarify the plot), resulting in a healthy dose of madness diffused somewhat (and betrayed somewhat) by a small helping of the mundane.

Batman/Joker: Switch
Weird, different. | Different, weird.
GRADE: B-

www.dccomics.com

PICK OF THE WEEK

Mythology: The DC Comics Art of Alex Ross

Pantheon Books
$35, color, 288 pgs., hardcover, available now
Editors and writers: Chip Kidd, Geoff Spear

This book provides strong arguments that artist Alex Ross (*Marvels, Kingdom Come*) is the major chronicler of modern-day mythology. His ultra-realistic approach to such comics heroes as Superman and Batman brings them to life in a way that no movies or other comics have so far.

Buyers will see sketches of comic-book characters Ross drew starting at age 3, a display of three-dimensional cardboard Justice League figures he made that the authors found in a box in his attic, his recreations of classic comic covers, such as Superman's first appearance in *Action Comics*, shots of his family and friends posing as models, storyboards, background sketches, collectors' plates, DC Comics in-office promotional items, his *Uncle Sam* work, a DC bibliography, and much more.

The book's main subjects include *Kingdom Come*, *The Sandman*, *Teen Titans*, *Mad* magazine, the Paul Dini collaborations including *Shazam: Power of Hope*, and a short Batman-Superman original story written by Kidd. But that description just scratches the surface.

Kidd and Spear provide basic background on the subjects at hand without over-analyzing, wisely letting Ross tell his own stories, including a wealth of insight into why he prefers a traditionalist approach to comics (as evidenced by his depictions of Aquaman, Superman, and Green Lantern). The book's layout and design are also top-notch, with plenty of full-page prints to show off Ross' talent.

This volume screams for a follow-up consisting of his Marvel work. The book is well worth the suggested cover price of $35 but is available from such sources as *www.amazon.com* for as little as $24.50 with free shipping, which is a steal.

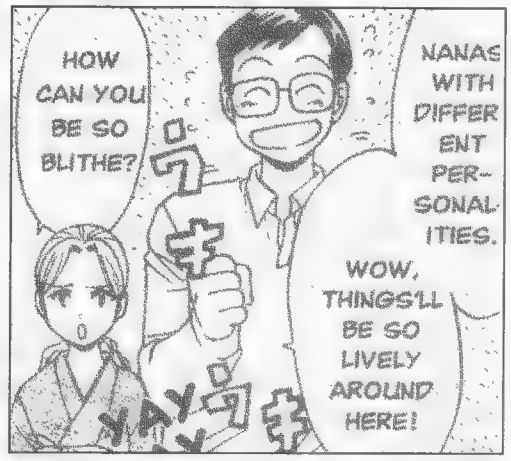
Mythology
Beautiful art, lots of creative insight. | Could have had more bio material.
GRADE: A+

reviewed by **Todd Haefer**

Seven of Seven Vol. 1 — ADV Manga

$9.99, b/w, 200 pgs., available now
Writer: Yasuhiro Imagawa; Artist: Azusa Kunihiro
reviewed by **S.A. Bennett**

Perfectly normal Japanese school girl Nana likes classmate Yuichi but is too shy to do anything about it. That's the extent of her problems until a magic gem splits her into seven types: Dynamic, Sexy, Crybaby, Smart, Easygoing, Mean, and Regular.



Naturally this "terrible secret" must be kept at all costs in proper *Bewitched/I Dream of Jeanie* fashion, at least at first — but halfway through Volume One all the Nanas are enrolled in the same school — eliminating what little situation there is in this supposed comedy.

From then on, it's just cooking mishaps, hot springs trips, gratuitous panty shots, and even some same-sex groping. (Sexy Nana has unique problem-solving skills.) The antics grow increasingly frantic but produce less and less in the way of laughs. Without real conflict to draw on, there's nothing for the characters (and I use that word loosely) to overcome, making this one all premise and no payoff.

Seven of Seven Vol. 1
Pretty enough. | But pretty hollow.
GRADE: C

www.advmanga.com

Union Station GN — Oni Press

$11.95, b/w, 112 pgs., available now
Writer: Ande Parks; Artist: Eduardo Barreto
reviewed by **Jim Johnson**

There is no finer line that a writer can walk than the one that separates fiction from history in a story that combines both. But it's a line that Parks walks with delicate literary grace, never forgetting the difference between taking a few liberties with the truth and taking a few bites out of it.

In 1930s Kansas City, Union Station was the city's central train depot. Here, it's also the site of a routine prisoner transfer gone horribly awry, a mishap that results from the clashing agendas of local police, the feds, and the mob — one that's witnessed by a local reporter blessed with the coincidental fortune of good timing.

From this point on, feds and mobsters, and fact and fiction, blend into a seamless story. This graphic novel is the sequentially illustrated equivalent of James Cameron's oft-criticized but beautifully filmed *Titanic*: a gorgeous period piece extracting fictional accounts based on real-life events. Like Cameron, Parks has clearly done his research, and all but avid historians will likely be unable to discern what came from Parks' mind and what came from the library.

Of course, a period piece would never have been this convincing without Barreto's own well-researched take on '30s-era fashions and architecture. Barreto walks a fine line of his own, as well: the line between illustrations that are complex enough to make for easy differentiation between characters but simple enough to carry along the story without overpowering it. On all points, this is a fascinating crime story that will especially impress *Road to Perdition* fans.

Union Station GN

PRO	CON
Flawless blend of fiction and fact.	No cons here; just crooks.

GRADE: A

www.onipress.com
ISBN 1-929998-69-4

Nightveil #1 — AC Comics

$6.95, b/w, 32 pgs., available now
Writers: Paul Melette, Mark Heike
Artists: Shawn Surface, Dave Roberts, Mark Heike
reviewed by **Jack Abramowitz**

There are three stories in this issue. The first, "A Visit to Old Friends" is a generic horror tale, with Nightveil coming off as a poor man's Doctor Strange, albeit one way easier on the eyes.

The second, an untitled framing sequence, is drawn in a cartoonier fashion than appropriate.

The final component (aside from the closing end of the framing sequence) is called "For the Sake of What Should Have Been."

Other than the unwieldy title, this is what we signed on for. It's a well-drawn Femforce story with good characterizations of a number of team members. The only downside is that it's not really a Nightveil story.

Sure, the bulleteer-*cum*-sorceress is arguably the central character, but Synn ("The Girl from L.S.D.") could just as easily claim that title. With Ms. Victory riding shotgun, it's really more a Femforce story featuring Nightveil than a tale of her own.

Nightveil is a mixed bag. If it doesn't bother you that the best part of it is more Femforce than specifically the title character, give it a go.

Nightveil #1

PRO	CON
"For the Sake ..."	... is not pure 'veil.

GRADE: C+

www.accomics.com

SERIES SPOTLIGHT

New X-Men #146-148 — Marvel

$2.99@, color, 32 pgs.@, available now
Writer: Grant Morrison; Artist: Phil Jimenez

Grant Morrison continues to spin interesting tales after more than two years on "adjectiveless" *X-Men* (a moniker that will have to be dropped one of these days with the addition of that "New" to the title).

"Planet X" gets under way with Professor X trying to determine who the traitor is in the X-mansion as well as mounting a rescue mission to retrieve Wolverine from near-Earth orbit. Jean Grey (who's still coming to grips with the re-emergence of The Phoenix Force) takes off for space. Meanwhile, Xavier and Mister Xorn work with the team's newest student, who can turn into a full-blown sandstorm in an instant, only to find that her out-of-control powers have trashed Cerebra. By the end of the first issue of the story arc, Magneto has returned, more menacing than ever, and Xavier is his prisoner.

From there the focus quickly shifts to New York City, where Magneto and his new Brotherhood of Evil Mutants (mostly made up of Xavier's newest students and the ever-present Toad) wreak havoc on the city, driving out or exterminating the "normal" humans and destroying all access points. Strangely enough, no other Marvel heroes seem to be paying attention, as neither The Avengers nor Spider-Man nor The Fantastic Four (OK, they're off on their own mission in Latveria) take the least little bit of action. In the old days, this would have been the impetus for a full-blown intra-company crossover like "Atlantis Attacks" or "Inferno," but those days appear to be totally gone now. The only nod to the past is the ongoing Jean Grey/Wolverine subplot that should have long since been resolved but that like a bad soap opera story, keeps returning and returning and returning.

New X-Men #146-148

PRO	CON
Intriguing story.	Nobody else is paying attention.

Overall, Morrison's story is a page-turner, and Jimenez' art does an excellent job of keeping each character distinct. But *why* doesn't any of the rest of the Marvel universe get involved?

GRADE A-

Brent Frankenhoff

www.marvel.com

READING ROOM REPORT CARD

From CBG #1569 and #1570

Action Comics #809	B
Alias #28	A
Betty and Veronica #194	C+
The Book of Legion	D
Conan: The Legend #0	B
Crossfire: The Beginning #2	D+
Crush #1	B
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Essential Tomb of Dracula	A
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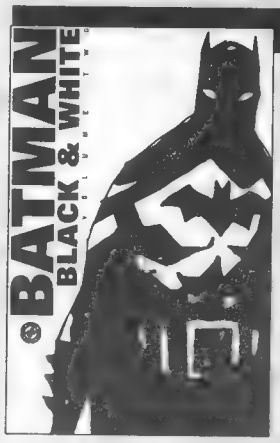
Iron Man #73-74	B+
Justice League: Speed Trap	B
Justice Society Returns!	A-
Last Exit Before Toll	A
Licensable Bear™ #1	B+
Mad about Comic Strips	A-
Marvel Encyclopedia Vol. 4	A
Miyuki-Chan in Wonderland	B
Mortal Coils #3	A-
Now Vol. 1	B
Realm of the Claw #1	B
The Ring Vol. 1	B
Real Advs. of the Young Americans	B
Rob Zombie's Spookshow Int. #1	C
Tales from the Pimp #0-1	B-
Trakk Monster Hunter #1	C

COMICS GUIDE

By Maggie Thompson

Batman Black & White Vol. 2 — DC



Various, black and white, 176 pgs, ISBN 1-56389-917-5, $19.95, available now.

In 1998, DC released *Batman Black & White*, reprinting the four-issue 1996 miniseries anthology featuring 11 Done in One short stories by a number of artists and writers, some associated with The Dark Knight, some not. More recently, of course, black-and-white Batman stand-alone short stories ran as a back-up in *Gotham Knights* — and a collection of those (plus some new episodes) came out in hardcover last year. Today, the price drops with a paperback version of the hardcover. Down sides: The package doesn't match Vol. 1. (It's bigger and shows off the art even better.) There's not enough gutter at the spine. That's about it. The incredible variety of story and art demonstrate that the stereotypical "hero in Spandex" can be the foundation for funny, sad, ironic, thought-provoking, important, trivial, and/or don't-miss storytelling. www.dccomics.com

THE BLACKLIST SHUT US DOWN. ALL OF US.
BLACKLIST'S BEEN OVER FOR TWENTY YEARS. WHERE'VE YOU BEEN?
WHO ARE YOU TO JUDGE ME?
YOU MAY NOT LIKE MY METHODS, BUT AT LEAST I'M DOING SOMETHING!

Robin #121 — DC

Bill Willingham, Rick Mays, Aaron Sowd, color, 32 pgs., $2.25, available Dec. 17.

At the 10th anniversary of the launch of this series, DC introduces a new creative team. It's Tim Drake's first day as a Junior at a new high school, and Robin is about to meet a menace who may solve his social problems by simply killing him. Chuck Dixon wrote the series for most of that decade, but his move to CrossGen brought others aboard. Willingham is a skilled storyteller, often working with high-fantasy projects. *Robin* #121 kicks off more traditional super-hero fare for him, and the story sucks in any reader who's gone through the unsettling first day in a new environment. In an ordinary day for Batman's sidekick, the story explains Robin's cape, shows him in action, provides a relaxed discussion with Batman, features an exchange with Alfred (Is it a good idea to use a spray cleaner on a computer? Oh, well, trust Alfred.), and brings him face to face with a nasty, nasty enforcer. It's confident, entertaining storytelling with a compelling cliffhanger. www.dccomics.com

UHM...I'LL STICK WITH THIS SCHEDULE.
A REBEL, HUH? SUIT YOURSELF. NAME'S BERNARD DOWD, BY THE WAY. BERNARD, GOT IT? NEVER BERNIE. CALL ME BERNIE AND I'LL HAVE TO PUNISH YOU.

Rose & Thorn #1 (of 6) — DC

Gail Simone, Adriana Melo, Dan Green, color, 32 pgs., $2.95, shipping Dec. 17.

Rose and Thorn (no relation to the Cartoon Books characters) *used* to be a Golden Age duo introduced in *Flash Comics* #89 (Nov 47). She used to transform from the blonde Rose (who eventually married Alan Scott, the Golden Age Green Lantern) to the murdering, thieving redhead Thorn. Eventually, one personality of the mother of Jade and Obsidian killed the other personality — and herself. The *new* Rose and Thorn were introduced in *Superman's Girl Friend Lois Lane* #105 (Oct 70) in the person of Rose Forrest — whose split personality grew from a desire to take vengeance on The 100, an organization that had killed her police detective father. Over the years, she's popped up occasionally — *e.g.*, in *The Brave and the Bold* #188-189 (1982), *Action* #669 (1991), and *Adventures of Superman* #520-1 (1995) and #585 (2000). Now, her story begins again, as Rhosyn Forrest finds herself in the care of an unscrupulous psychiatrist in the Siamare Youth Care Facility. Then, the story segues to three years later, with the teen seemingly in control of her violent tendencies. Seemingly. The art is attractive and keeps the pacing varied; the character herself plays well with the shrinking Rose and a Thorn who is (understandably) aggressive. www.dccomics.com

I WANT YOU TO IMAGINE THORN. SEE HOW ANGRY SHE IS?
IMAGINE HER AS SEPARATE. ANOTHER PERSON ENTIRELY.
...THAT'S HURTING ME.
IMAGINE THE HALLWAY. JUST LIKE WE DISCUSSED. WE NEED TO TRAP THORN THERE—FOR JUST A MOMENT. CAN YOU DO THAT?

The Vampire's Christmas — Image

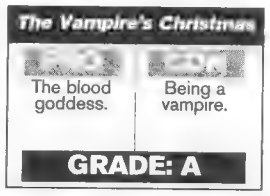
$5.95, color, 46 pgs., available now
Writer and artist: Joseph Michael Linsner
reviewed by **S.A. Bennett**

A lot of contemporary horror stories manage to miss the obvious: A vampire must stink. And the only thing worse than being a vampire is being one at Christmas — which is brought all the way home in both the simple, elegant prose and stunningly beautiful pictures that make up Michael Linsner's graphic novelette.

There's nothing romantic about his Tobias Esque, who commits his grisly feedings grime-covered and as crusty as month-old bread. Still, even loathsome as he is, he discriminates when it comes to prey (hates child abusers, won't prey on children), and, although asexual, he can still covet one of Linsner's signature *femmes*, this one a literal *fatale*.

It neatly avoids being an anti-Christmas fable for would-be Goths, because, as many jaundiced jabs as Linsner gives holiday rituals, he acknowledges that being with other humans is preferable to the alternative — though Tobias wouldn't agree.

www.imagecomics.com



Hawkman #21 — DC

$2.50, color, 48 pgs., available now
Writer: Geoff Johns; Artist: Rags Morales
reviewed by **Brett Weiss**

In "The Headhunter Part II: Taking off the Mask," Geoff Johns makes good use of the Hawkman mythos, especially concerning Carter Hall's past lives and the fleshing out of a new villain. The Headhunter is fittingly ghoulish with decidedly creepy motives, and Hawkman's sense of astonishment and personal violation near the end of the issue are virtually palpable, thanks in no small part to Rags Morales' stunning art.

Also effective are Johns' employment of the pseudo-scientific Nth Metal (the substance that enables the Hawks to fly) and his scene in which Carter gives a student a failing grade on a history test. After all, Carter lived during the time and knows exactly what happened, while the student must rely on mere history books, which are "full of lies."

What *doesn't* work is the thought of Carter snooping around Kendra's apartment while she's on a date

with another man. Kendra's righteous indignation makes for good drama, and it's obvious that Carter still loves Kendra, but a proud, dignified hero of Hawkman's stature would hardly stoop to such a thing.

Still, this is a darkly interesting storyline that fans of *Spider-Man Fearful Symmetry: Kraven's Last Hunt* may find appealing.

Hawkman #21

PRO	CON
The Headhunter.	Hawkman's lack of dignity.

GRADE: B+

www.dccomics.com

Necronauts — 2000 AD

$13.95, b/w, 64 pgs., available now
Writer: Gordon Rennie; Artist: Frazer Irving
reviewed by **Jack Abramowitz**

Dark Horse's *Fort: Prophet of the Unexplained* starred Charles Fort and a young H.P. Lovecraft as early-20th century Men in Black. This volume increases the concept, as Fort and a somewhat older Lovecraft team with Harry Houdini and Sir Arthur Conan Doyle to save humanity from a threat from beyond.

Before you get righteously indignant that this story has unjustly appropriated Dark Horse's concept, be advised that it's a reprint. It originally appeared serialized in *2000 AD* #1223-1230 in 2001.

The villain of the tale appears to be another celebrated figure of the day. Wisely, this controversial figure is not named in the tale, leaving it open.

The world of the Necronauts is black and white. Appropriately, so is the art. It is a little weird and creepy. In fact, it is probably the perfect amount of weird and creepy to convey the mood.

One of the Necronauts is portrayed in a negative light, which seems unfair at first. Once the reader sees where Rennie goes with it, it works better.

A principal character dies at the story's end. (No spoiler warning is necessary; it's a historical fact.) This appears to limit the likelihood of a reunion, but, with a premise such as this, anything is possible.

Necronauts

PRO	CON
Harry, Arthur, Charles, and H.P.	Sequel unlikely.

GRADE: A-

www.2000adonline.com

Alice 19th — Viz

$9.95, b/w, 192 pgs., available now
Writer and artist: Yu Watase
reviewed by **S.A. Bennett**

Except for the girl and the rabbit, the only Wonderland to be found here is a world in which another Alice is so afraid to hurt anyone she's emotionally paralyzed. Ignored by her parents and overshadowed by her more popular sister (whose boyfriend Alice secretly covets), she's barely even there.

That's the case until the rabbit spirit girl (?) Nyozeka helps her learn the magic of the Lotis Words — not to save Earth from doom, but to work out her personal problems. Throughout Volume One, Nyozeka acts mostly as a Greek chorus whose constant refrain "use your words" refers not so much to the magic kind as those of the everyday variety. The subtext here seems to be "speak and you'll be heard," as Alice's problems, mystical and otherwise, vaporize when she has the courage to say how she feels. (Is honest communication a rarity in Japan?) By the creator of *Fushigi Yugi*, this is just as beautiful and heartfelt.

Alice 19th

PRO	CON
Honesty.	Girl? Rabbit? Which?

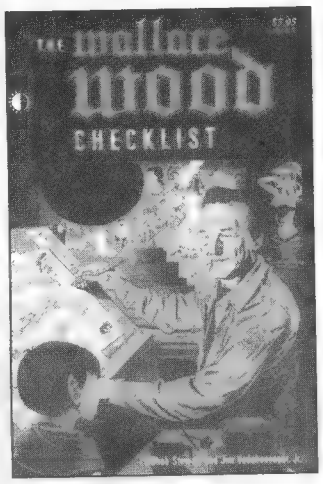
GRADE: B

www.viz.com

The Wallace Wood Checklist — TwoMorrows

$5.95, b/w, 64 pgs., available now
Writers: Bhob Stewart, Jim Vadeboncouer, Jr.
reviewed by **Brett Weiss**

A nice companion piece to *Against the Grain: Mad Artist Wallace Wood* (an excellent bio of the prolific artist), *The Wallace Wood Checklist* provides a thorough (if admittedly incomplete) listing of Wood's work in comics, comic strips, magazines, gum cards, advertising, and other media. Accompanied by a full-page photo of Wood (circa late '70s) and a two-page introduction by author Stewart, this comic-book-sized publication is about as comprehensive as one could hope for.



Casual Wood fans familiar with his work primarily through *Mad*, *Daredevil*, *Sally Forth*, *T.H.U.N.D.E.R. Agents*, and various E.C. titles may be surprised to know that his art graces the box of a *Sea Hunt* board game, an Alka-Seltzer magazine ad, the cover of a *TV Guide* from 1968 (depicting funny animals running from super-heroes), and much, much more.

Wallace Wood Checklist

PRO	CON
Painstaking checklist of great artist.	Lists make for dry reading.

GRADE: B+

The listings, which include unpublished as well as published work, contain story titles, dates, names of assistants, and other useful information, and almost every page is accompanied by at least one illustration. Unfortunately, there are no color pictures.

www.twomorrows.com

The Quest for Alzerzen: Book One — Ibooks

$12.95, color, 48 pgs., available now
Writer and artist: Mac N' Guessan
reviewed by **S.A. Bennett**

Ibooks' new, nearly tabloid-sized format is a great innovation for publishing European-size graphic novels. (We lost this "album-size" format some time in the '90s, when publishers realized a certain number of fan boys wouldn't buy it, if it couldn't fit in a comic box.) It's a shame this inaugural edition has mostly small, cramped panels that doesn't use the format to its best advantage.

It's really pretty, but it's also saddled with a standard epic-fantasy plot that lopes along, taking its sweet time to make its minimal points (giant bug invaders, bad; raised from dead hero, good) without using the space to flesh out the characters. And it doesn't help that the scratchy European-style lettering can be difficult to read and a barrier that prevents the reader from becoming involved in the story.

Would it have really compromised the artist's creative vision, if it had been done in a more American style? (After all, we do it all the time with manga.)

Quest for Alzerzen

PRO	CON
Art.	Lettering.

GRADE: B

www.ibooks.com

THE REVIEW CREW

Brent Frankenhoff

Managing editor of ***Comics Buyer's Guide***, Brent manages this rotating circle of ***CBG*** Review Crew writers. In between, he finds time for reviews.
Review copies to 700 E. State St., Iola, WI 54990

Jack Abramowitz

Jack is the administrator of a national youth movement. He's been collecting comics for 30 years and writing about them for 10.
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Todd Haefer

In addition to his comics and science-fiction interests, Todd is an associate editor in Krause's numismatics division.
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Brett Weiss

A former owner of Fantastic Comics & Cards, Brett has collected comics for almost three decades. He is now a full-time freelancer, writing reviews.
Review copies to 6537 Moonglow Ln., Watauga, TX 76148.

S.A. Bennett

S.A. is also a member of the Retailer Review panel for ***CBG***'s *Comics in Your Future*.
Review copies to Dark Star Comics, 237 Xenia Ave., Yellow Springs, OH 45387.

Jim Johnson

Jim has been a fan of mainstream, independent, and alternative comics for longer than he cares to admit and has given a mental review to each and every comic book in his collection.
E-mail Jim at: JimsReview@Yahoo.com

All Things Oz — Clarkson Potter/Publishers

$29.95, color, 352 pgs., available now
Editor: Linda Sunshine
reviewed by **Jack Abramowitz**

A lot of Oz books are released every year, most of which are more about the MGM film than Baum's world. Few bring much new to the table and *very* few are "must-haves" for the serious Ozophile.

ILLUSTRATIONS FROM THE WILLARD CARROLL COLLECTION
ALL THINGS
OZ
The Wonder, Wit, and Wisdom of The Wizard of Oz
Edited by LINDA SUNSHINE

All Things Oz is a "must-have."

This small, thick hardcover is packed with rare Oz art from the Willard Carroll collection. (With a name like "Carroll," you'd expect him to have an *Alice in Wonderland* collection!) Much of the art has never before been published in the States.

There's Oz stationery from 1925, art from a Hungarian LP, the cover of a Russian board game, and photos of toys, dolls, and hangers. (Yes, clothes hangers.) There's art from Italy, Japan, and Portugal, as well as stills from the silent movie, the MGM musical, and the cartoon.

But the art is only half the package. There are quotes from Baum on a variety of aspects of life in Oz. There are biographical sketches of characters and vignettes culled from the books. Three of Baum's hard-to-find "Little Wizard" stories are reprinted in their entirety. And there are quotes from the likes of T.S. Eliot, James Thurber, and Robert Heinlein.

The contents are listed by theme, then by page, which kind of works. The art index is by country, then by page, which doesn't. (It took forever to identify the art on Page 20.) The next volume should list the art strictly by page number.

www.randomhouse.com

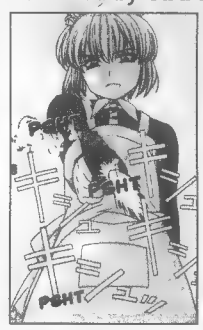
All Things Oz

PRO	CON
Great rare stuff.	Finding art sources.

GRADE: A

Gunslinger Girl Vol. 1 — ADV Manga

$9.99, b/w, 186 pgs., available now
Writer and artist: Yu Aida
reviewed by **S.A. Bennett**



This is disturbing from the first page: a beautiful color illustration of a sweet-looking lead in her school uniform, cradling an automatic weapon that's almost as long as she is tall.

Readers know from *La Femme Nikita* and its endless imitators that vulnerable girls make the best government-sponsored assassins, but *Gunslinger Girl* has an even more distasteful twist on the concept. The "Social Welfare Agency" turns physically challenged Japanese teens into cyborg killers. Thoroughly brainwashed, the lead, Henrietta, can kill in cold blood one moment and cuddle a teddy bear in another and has a standard schoolgirl-crush-with-a-much-older-guy relationship with her Agency handler. But even worse than all its bad taste aspects combined is that it's just not very interesting. Who knew having a license to kill could be this dull?

www.advmanga.com

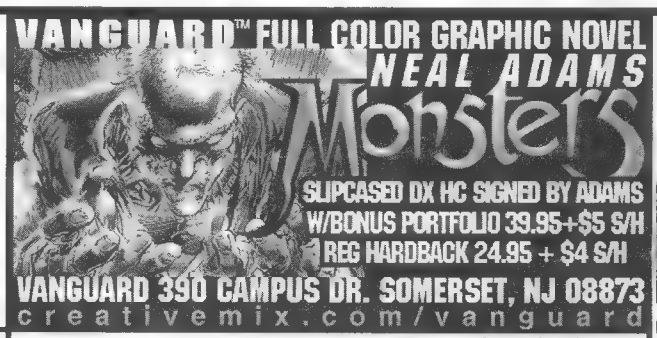
Gunslinger Girl Vol. 1

PRO	CON
Not much.	Handicapped killers.

GRADE: C

PUBLISHER'S SHOWCASE

Publisher showcase ads are available at $36.00 each. Typesetting, is included in the cost.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Retailers listed in bold sell Comics Buyer's Guide in their stores. For information on how you can sell Comics Buyer's Guide in your store contact your Comics Distributor or our Bulk Sales Department at 715-445-2214.

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BACK ISSUES

CBG's weekly nostalgia celebration!

"At CBG, we recognize that the classic comics of yesteryear are why most of us got into comics in the first place. It's our mission to celebrate those comics by reminding you of great characters and stories, presenting insights into what creators had in mind, and searching out affordable reprints!"

Betcha you haven't seen *this* Santa!

Will Eisner's Christmas story was distributed only to the Army.

Now it's here for you! Page 28

The creators, characters, and series people are STILL talking about today!

FLASHBACK

15 years ago

The Yellow Page Publishers Association agreed in December 1988 that YPPA members in 1989 would offer the heading "Comic Books." Marvel Vice President/Direct Sales **Carol Kalish** said, "The important development here is that, for the first time, Yellow Pages are admitting that the comic-book field is as important as other hobbies that have had their own, separate listings for years." She specified coins, trading cards, and stamps.

20 years ago

Kitchen Sink Press published the first issue of ***Will Eisner's Quarterly*** (Win 83), a 64-page magazine that included the first chapter of *A Life Force* and an Eisner-conducted interview with **Neal Adams**.

25 years ago

The first Carrion put in his first appearance in *Spectacular Spider-Man* #25 (Dec 78).

30 years ago

A **Bernie Wrightson**-drawn Batman met Swamp Thing in DC's *Swamp Thing* #7 (Dec 73).

35 years ago

Deadman found his killer in DC's *Strange Adventures* #215 (Dec 68).

Goliath became Yellowjacket in Marvel's *The Avengers* #59 (Dec 68).

40 years ago

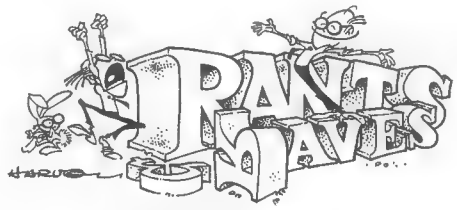
Tony Stark replaced his gold armor with a more streamlined red-and-gold version, becoming "The new Iron Man," in Marvel's *Tales of Suspense* #48 (Dec 63).

CBG ONLINE!

Subscribers! *Read the latest issue of* ***CBG*** *online every Thursday! Visit* ***www.collect.com/issues.asp*** *to log in and follow the instructions on the site.*

Comics news and notes

An occasional round-up of interesting tidbits



By **R.C. Harvey**

Jim Carrey will voice RJ the cocksure racoon in the animated version of *Over the Hedge*, a comic strip written by Michael Fry and drawn with great comedic skill by T. Lewis; RJ's buddy, Verne the box turtle, will be voiced by Gary Shandling. Due out in 2005, the film, which is a prequel to the strip, shows RJ as the charismatic con man who convinces other animals in the woods at the edge of suburbia that humans are their best friends, putting food into special cans (*i.e.*, garbage cans) and leaving them outside for the woodland folk. Tim Johnson (*Sinbad*), who is overseeing the production, said it was "daunting" for animators to capture Carrey's rubber-faced persona: "We have to make an animated character that's as good as live-action Jim Carrey. It's a challenge."

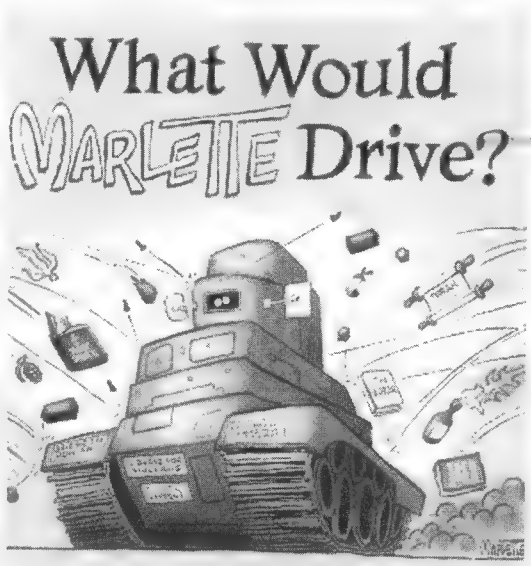
'Scuse me? RJ is already a character with a personality of his own, so now he's going to be morphed into Jim Carrey? The voice is going to determine the character and not the other way around? I'm not so sure about this.

Editorial cartoonist Doug Marlette has a new book of cartoons and commentary: *What Would Marlette Drive?* The title refers to a cartoon he produced last spring that depicted a man in Middle Eastern garb driving a Ryder truck loaded with a nuclear-tipped bomb. It was captioned: "What Would Mohammed Drive?"

Said Marlette, "Besides referring to the vehicle that Timothy McVeigh rode into Oklahoma City, the drawing was a takeoff on the 'What Would Jesus Drive?' campaign created by Christian evangelicals to challenge the morality of owning gas-guzzling SUVs."

Because of the reference to Mohammed and, indirectly, Islam and all Muslims, Marlette's cartoon inspired widespread protest in the Muslim community — 20,000 e-mails demanding an apology, to be exact. Marlette discussed this adventure in the book, excerpted in the November-December issue of the *Columbia Journalism Review*.

"In my 30-year career," he wrote, "I have regularly drawn cartoons that offended religious fundamentals and true believers of every stripe, a fact that I tend to list in the 'Accomplishments' column of my résumé. I have outraged Christians by skewering Jerry Falwell, Catholics by needling the Pope, and Jews by criticizing Israel. Those who rise up against the expression of ideas are strikingly similar. No one is less tolerant than those demanding tolerance. Despite the differences of culture and creed, they all seem to share the notion that there is only one way of looking at things — their way."



Marlette's newspaper, the *Tallahassee Democrat*, pulled his Drive cartoon off its website, and it never ran in the paper's print edition. Protesters, Marlette said, have learned that the bottom line of the ledger of profit and loss is what motivates newspaper managers these days, and he lamented the triumph of the accountancy.

"Our sense of fair play," he added, "has been turned against us ... [and] tolerance has become a tool of coercion ..." And he goes on:

"In order to maintain our true, nationally defining diversity, it obligates journalists to be bold, writers to be full-throated and uninhibited, and those blunt instruments of the free press, cartoonists like me, not to self-censor. We must use it or lose it. Political cartoonists daily push the limits of free speech. They were once the embodiment of journalism's independent voice. Today they are as endangered a species as bald eagles. The professional trouble-maker has become a luxury that offends the bottom-line sensibilities of corporate journalism. Twenty years ago, there were 200 of us working on daily newspapers. Now there are only 90.

"We know what happens to the bald eagle when it's not allowed to reproduce and its habitat is contaminated. As the species is thinned, the eco-balance is imperiled. Why should we care about the obsolescence of the editorial cartoonist? Because cartoons can't say 'on the other hand,' because they strain reason and logic, because they are hard to defend and thus are the acid test of the First Amendment, and that is why they must be preserved."

The book, published by Plan Nine Publishing (*www.plan9.org*) is available through the website for $15.95 plus $5.95 shipping.

Stay 'tooned at ***www.RCHarvey.com.*** ✦

INSIDE THIS SECTION

- **Red-Hot Thrill** by Steven E. Mitchell **34**
- **Ask Mr. Silver Age** by Mr. Silver Age **30**

"Retired"?

Jim Mooney continues a career that began more than 60 years ago

CATCHING UP WITH
Jim Mooney

By **Maggie Thompson**

Jim Mooney was born Aug. 13, 1919, in Mt. Vernon, N.Y. His family moved from place to place around the country, owing to the Depression, winding up in Los Angeles when he was in his late teens.

His start as a professional artist grew out of his love for science fiction. Mooney told ***CBG***, "I was fascinated by science fiction. I belonged to the Science Fiction League in Los Angeles." The SFL, sponsored by *Wonder Stories*, was begun in 1934, and the Los Angeles chapter included such members as Forrest J Ackerman and pulp writers Henry Kuttner, C.L. Moore, and Hugh Cave. Mooney said, "I thought A. Merritt's *The Moon Pool* was the greatest thing ever. I was an inexperienced kid going to art school, and Henry Kuttner said, 'Why don't you send your art to Farnsworth Wright?' " Wright was editor of *Weird Tales*, the foremost horror fantasy pulp magazine. "I thought, 'Why not?' and sent in three pictures Wright published when I was 17 or 18."

After more training, the young artist wound up in New York City, and his first comic-book job came on staff at the Eisner-Iger shop. "I was very inexperienced," Mooney said, "and when I spent the first week at Eisner-Iger and saw the talent there — Nick Cardy, Lou Fine, and Eisner himself — I thought it might be a good idea to get the hell out of there." Following a couple of weeks there, he tried out at Ace Comics and ended up with a feature called "Magno and Davey." Magno could, well, magnetize things, and his boy sidekick had similar talents. "Every super-hero had to have a young buddy then," Mooney said. "It was typical of that period."

As he sought out work, Mooney wound up working with Stan Lee on a Terrytoons project, "our first collaboration." The two have been friends for years, although they've ended up across the continent from each other. Mooney worked as a freelancer for Timely Comics in the 1940s, and other freelance work included uncredited bullpen work on "Camilla" in *Jungle Comics* and "Suicide Smith" in *Wings* for Fiction House, and material for Fox Features and Quality Comics.

After providing Batman samples to DC, he worked there from 1946 until 1968 as a freelancer, working on a variety of projects. These included "Robin" stories for *Star-Spangled Comics*, stories in titles like *House of Secrets* and *House of Mystery*, and even work on the *Batman* newspaper strip. He may be best known for his nine years' work on "Supergirl" stories, but the feature's style was a simple one that Mooney has said "fenced in" what he'd like to have done on them.

Of his DC work, he told ***CBG*** his favorite was "Tommy Tomorrow" for *Action Comics*. "I really enjoyed doing it," he said. "It was sort of *Buck Rogers*-ish: simple but fun." He said pulp writer Otto Binder, who created both Mary Marvel and Supergirl, wrote many of those tales.

In 1969, he sought work with Marvel and took over some of the work on *Amazing Spider-Man*. He tightened and inked pencils on that feature for some time, along with handling art on a wide variety of other Marvel projects. These included drawing Steve Gerber's *Omega the Unknown* and working with Gerber on *Man-Thing* in 1975, after Mike Ploog and John Buscema had left that series. *Man-Thing* remains his favorite of all the comic-book art he has drawn in more than six decades, and he expressed excitement at news that a Man-Thing motion picture is in the works.

Why was that his favorite feature? Mooney responded, "The only thing I can say on that is that Gerber's scripts had a lot to do with it. I had gone from DC's full-script process, in which writers and editors set up the layouts the way they wanted it. With Marvel, I received an outline, and *I* broke it down. I thought that was great, because I had some input, a feeling of participation. When I received this script from Gerber, it was full-script, and I thought, 'Oh, this will be *terrible*!' Then, I read it and was surprised at how good it was."

In 1975, he moved to Florida with a Marvel contract that lasted about a decade. In the varied assignments he received during the 1980s, he inked the Spider-Man of John Romita Jr., just as he had finished John Romita's Spider-Man in the early 1970s.

Eventually, Mooney retired — but retirement has not meant an end to his comic-book work. As a freelancer, for example, he's inked *Soulsearchers & Co.* and pencilled and inked *Elvira* for Claypool. And, though his first conventions were small Florida events, he eventually traveled further afield, first attending the national San Diego convention in 1996. He's appeared at conventions in Oakland, Chicago, Detroit, Seattle, and — closer to home — Tampa, Orlando, and Miami. His wife, Anne, goes with him. "She enjoys them immensely," Mooney said, adding that at a recent MegaCon, "She was whizzing around in a mobile scooter."

He's cut back convention appearance, which for some might have meant a cutback on sales of originals. "I go to Orlando, only because I can drive there; my legs aren't quite up to long-distance travel." But the Internet has let him continue active projects.

Why continue to work, when he's supposedly retired? "I guess it's a compulsion," he said. "I'm on the net, so most of my commissions come that way now." Fans who filter for "Jim Mooney" will see he's selling some of his work on eBay, and he is also available via *mooney1919@msn.com*. ✦

IN BRIEF ...

Mr. Silver Age gets Mooney design

Despite the wide variety of the work Jim Mooney has created over the years, he's best known for his work on Supergirl. Nevertheless, he was the first to draw such characters as Brainiac 5, Colossal Boy, Chameleon Boy, and Phantom Girl, so fan commissions have included depictions of Supergirl and Legion of Super Heroes character. "There's a new Legion book out now," he said, "and some of the commissions I've done are in those books: whatever has come down the line."

In fact, shortly to be released is his most recent work: a version of ***CBG***'s own Mr. Silver Age — as designed by Mooney himself. It appears below — and in Krause Publications' *Baby Boomer Comics*, now at the printer.

B BIRTHDAYS and INDUSTRY EVENTS

Mon 15 DEC

CBG #1572 ships

Born on this date:
Kurt Schaffenberger (1920)
Ed Quinby (1952)
J. Marc DeMatteis (1953) – **50** years ago
Steven Bove (1957)
Ted Slampyak (1965)

Tue 16 DEC

Born on this date:
Clem Robins
Otto Soglow (1900)
Steve Mattsson (1959)
Dean Clarrain (1959)
Jose Collado (1968) – **35** years ago
John Nadeau (1971)

Wed 17 DEC

Born on this date:
Andy Mushynsky (1948) – **55** years ago
Greg Walker (1949)
Ronn Sutton (1952)
Michael Cherkas (1954)
Beau Smith (1954)
Matthew Hollingsworth (1968) – **35** years ago

New Comics Day! Scheduled to ship:

Dark Horse: *Goon* #4, *Lone* #4

DC: *Batgirl* #47, *Lucifer* #45, *Outsiders* #7, *Robin* #121

Image: *David & Goliath* #2, *G.I Joe Frontline* #18

Marvel: *Captain America* #21, *Hawkeye* #3 *Namor* #10

Thu 18 DEC

Born on this date:
Bill Neville (1952)
Ted Boonthanakit (1956)
Gary Fields (1961)

Fri 19 DEC

Born on this date:
David Scroggy (1951)
Peter Gillis (1952)
Eliot Brown (1954)
Lurene Haines (1958) – **45** years ago
Eric Hess (1962)

Sat 20 DEC

Born on this date:
James Van Hise (1949)
Dave Simons (1954)

Sun 21 DEC

Born on this date:
Bob Bindig (1920)
John Severin (1921)
Glen Johnson (1959)
Doug Wheeler (1960)
Mark Engblom (1965)

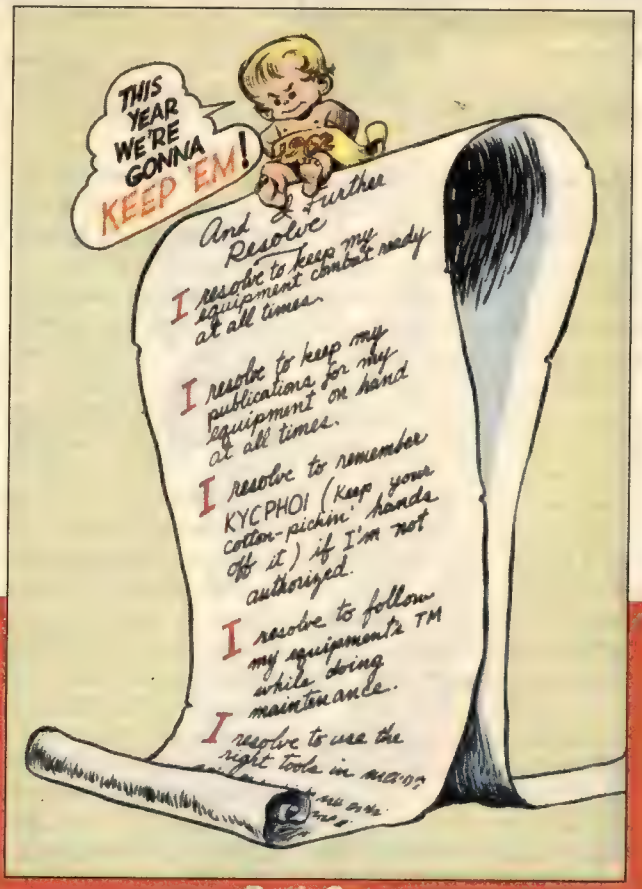
Correction: In our Dec. 1-7 birthday list, we overlooked Robin Riggs' birthday Dec. 6. Robin was born in 1961. Happy belated wishes!

Ho-ho-ho holiday bonus

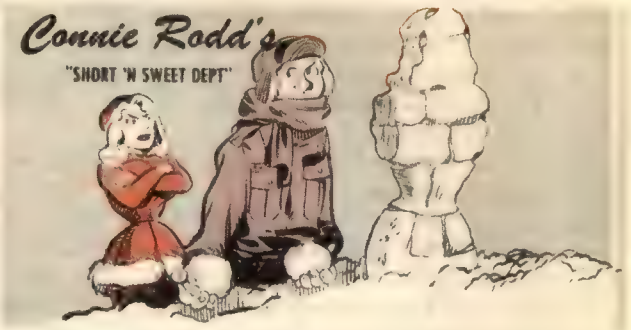
In 1961, Army motor pools read a cautionary Christmas tale — by Will Eisner

1961 Series
PS
THE PREVENTIVE MAINTENANCE MONTHLY
Issue 109
FROM THE LOOKS OF YOUR EQUIPMENT, SANTA, YOU PROBABLY CAN ADD A FEW MORE! HURRY - MY TIME'S RUNNIN' OUT!
1961
TM-RED
WILL EISNER

Front Cover

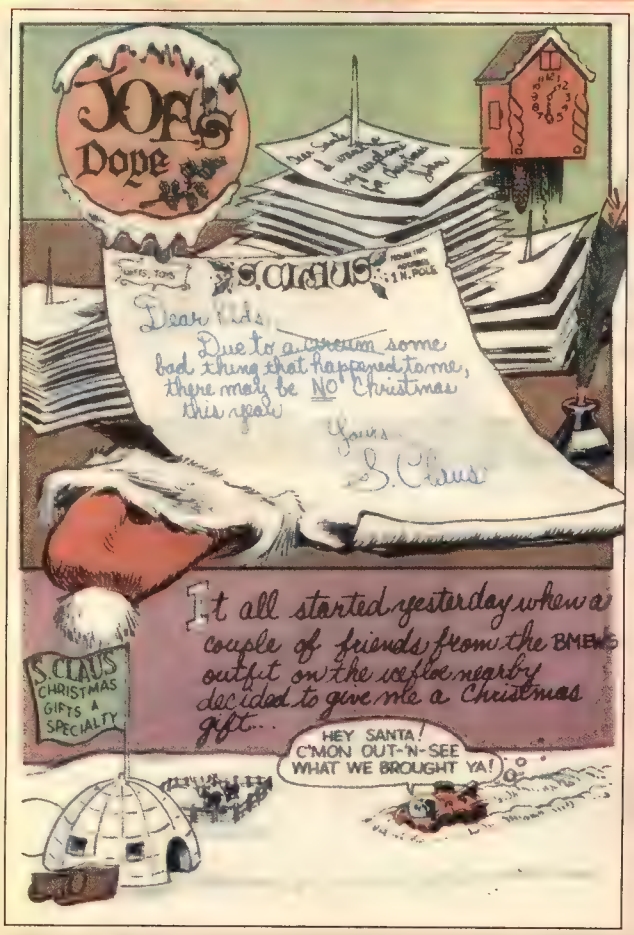

THIS YEAR WE'RE GONNA KEEP 'EM!
And further Resolve
I resolve to keep my equipment combat ready at all times.
I resolve to keep my publications for my equipment on hand at all times.
I resolve to remember KYCPHOI (Keep your cotton-pickin' hands off it) if I'm not authorized.
I resolve to follow my equipment's TM while doing maintenance.
I resolve to use the right tools in

Back Cover



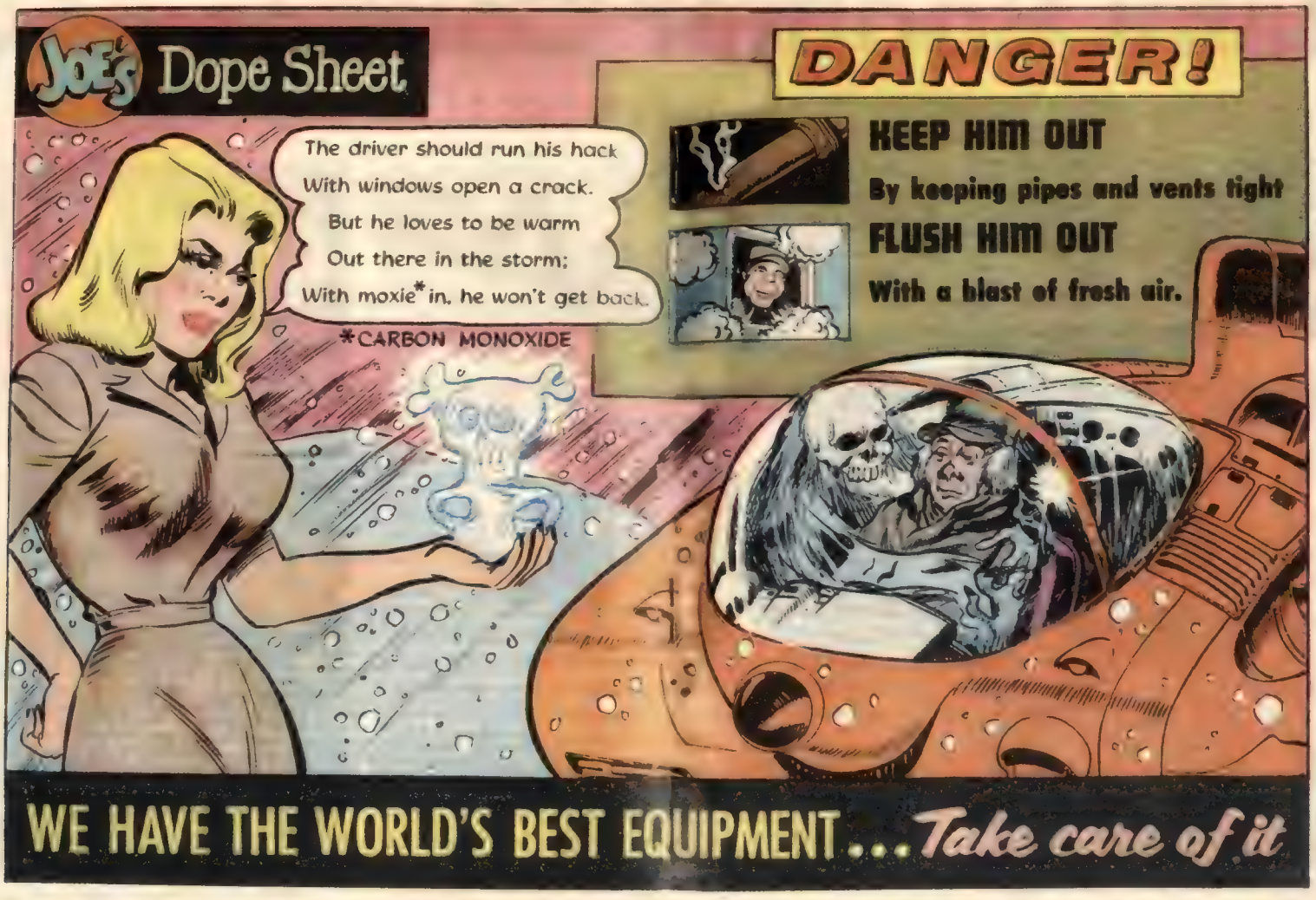
GO–LIKE 90
NEW
SURE IS, BUT MAKE SURE YOU'RE MIXING GO-90 WITH GO-90.
LOOKS GOOD!
OLD GO-90
Dear Half-Mast,
We received a 5-gal drum of GO-90 and we're all shook up. The stuff looks

***P.S. Magazine*'s ongoing characters included the buxom Connie Rodd and the experienced Half-Mast. The former provided attention-getting tips. The latter presided over questions from soldiers trying to cope with a variety of maintenance problems.**


JOE'S Dope
S. CLAUS
Dear Kids,
Due to a certain some bad thing that happened to me, there may be NO Christmas this year.
Yours
S. Claus
It all started yesterday when a couple of friends from the BMEWS outfit on the ice floe nearby decided to give me a Christmas gift...
S. CLAUS CHRISTMAS GIFTS A SPECIALTY
HEY SANTA! C'MON OUT-N-SEE WHAT WE BROUGHT YA!

To my surprise, it was a new type snow Kat...
GOSH.
BAH...NEW FANGLED GADGET!
THE CO SAYS YOU CAN BORROW THIS "KAT" FOR THE HOLIDAYS. Y'CAN NOW MAKE YOUR ROUNDS IN HALF THE TIME IT TOOK IN YR OLD SLED!
So, last night with my chores about done, I decided to deliver some early gifts down to the DEW line outfits... in my new snow kat.
BRRR... IT'S COLD... LET'S TURN ON THE PERSONNEL HEATER AND WARM UP BEFORE WE START OUT.
HEY, SHUT THAT WINDOW, BOY, DON'T WANT TO LET OUT THE HEAT!

And so I settled back... I did not check the personnel heater exhaust tube for leaks...
... If I had, I would have noticed ...
PIN HOLES IN TUBE
LOOSE CONNECTION, GASKET MISSING OR DAMAGED
I didn't even check the seals to see if they were tight.


JOE'S Dope Sheet
DANGER!
The driver should run his hack
With windows open a crack.
But he loves to be warm
Out there in the storm;
With moxie* in, he won't get back.
*CARBON MONOXIDE
KEEP HIM OUT
By keeping pipes and vents tight
FLUSH HIM OUT
With a blast of fresh air.
WE HAVE THE WORLD'S BEST EQUIPMENT... Take care of it

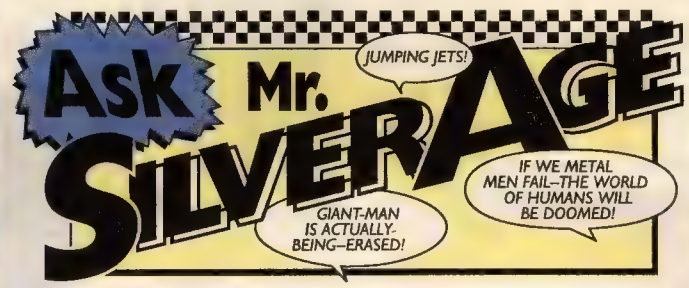
Also, I should have checked along the path from engine to the exhaust for any leaks along the way. (I was in a new kar, but the same thing goes for any tracked or wheeled vehicle where you burn gasoline or fuel oil in an engine or personnel heater.)
LEAKY MANIFOLD
LEAKY JOINT
LEAKY MUFFLER CONNECTION
Muffler, for instance
And before I started the engine up I should have checked to see that the access panels and plates were in place.
US AR

Sure, there was a smell
...But it was just fuel... little'd I realize then that CARBON MONOXIDE (WHICH HAS NO ODOR) often accompanies this.
I began to get drowsy ... I should have opened a window right then...
But... I... (YAWN)
PLOP
Lucky for me Mother Claus came out just then...
HALP... HE'S BEEN OVERCOME BY CARBON MONOXIDE FUMES!

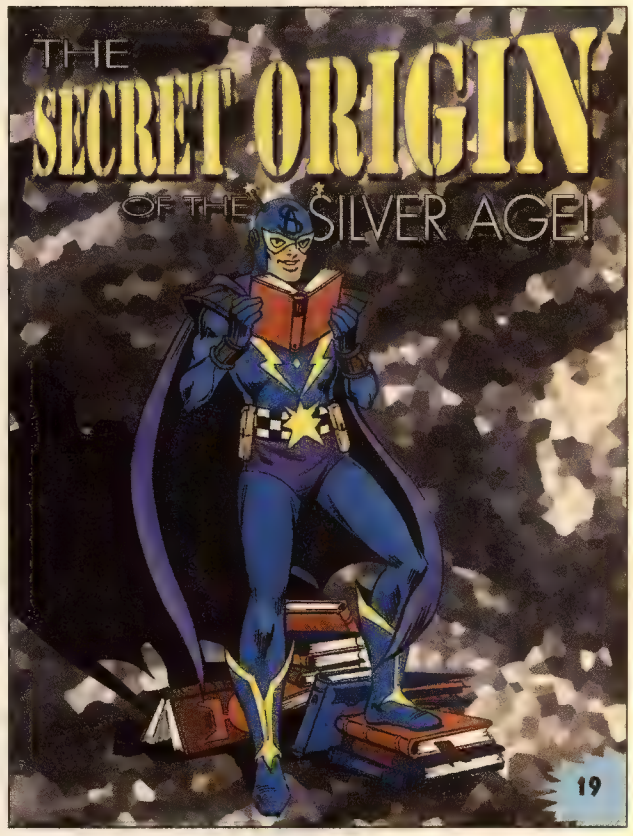
...And that's why there'll be no one bringing gifts to you this year...
*!!©2+☆!! NO! NO! LEGGO, CONNIE!
THERE, NOW... THAT DIDN'T HURT A BIT DID IT... HERE, LET ME GIVE YOUR PILLOW A PAT!!
PLEEEE CO-N-NI-E RODD!
THERE!! DON'T YOU THINK IT WAS SWEET OF HALF-MAST TO "VOLUNTEER" TO RUN YOUR ERRANDS THIS YEAR, SANTA?!!
GRUMBLE!

Baby Boomer Comics FAQ

Were there to be any frequently asked questions about this book, these might be those



By **Craig Shutt**



Not a dream! Not a hoax! Definitely not an imaginary collection of stories! Baby Boomer Comics has been published and should arrive at stores by year's end.

Dear Mr. Silver Age,

I've heard that you have a book coming out but I haven't seen it in any stores. Is there any truth to this rumor?

Lucien
The Dreaming

Mr. Silver Age says: That's a question being asked by many people, Luce — especially by those fans who have been waiting for *Baby Boomer Comics* since it was first confidently announced as arriving this (gulp) summer. Nobody regrets the delays more than I do, especially since they were out of my hands. But my editors tell me that, with page layouts approved and blue lines returned, the book is imminent as I write this, much less as you read it. So keep an eye out for it, because, if you like this column, you'll love the book.

In case anyone somehow missed the regular full-page ad or the italic ending on my column for the past (many) months, *Baby Boomer Comics* contains my typical kind of Silver Age foolishness, featuring columns from when I first began writing for ***CBG*** in 1992 until about 2000. Unlike those presentations, which were virtually all in black and white, *BBC* features a huge heaping wad of color panels and covers, with at least several illustrations per page. With more than 200 pages in the book, that's a lot of four-color fun!

To give the book cohesion and make it more comprehensible to a wider book audience, the format was altered from the letter-writer conceit featured here. *BBC* takes the premise that Mr. Silver Age is the curator of his own comics museum and is welcoming the reader, along with other visitors, as they tour the place. Each chapter leads the visitor into another "wing," where questions are asked about the comics on display.

Wackiest of all, readers get to see Mr. Silver Age as he leads them on this long, strange trip. That oddity results from the imagination and good graces of Silver Age artist supreme Jim Mooney, who has designed a Mr. Silver Age character! I knew Jim read the column, so I was thrilled when he agreed to create a character. He took all the ideas we gave him and came up with a cool look that captures the wacky essence of a Silver Age-oriented column. And my editors, knowing a good thing when they see it, slapped that sucker about every place they could put it in the book.

In addition to Mr. Silver Age's silly self, each article is profusely illustrated with key panels and includes reprint lists, cover shots with creator credits, and other details. Chapters cover everything from costumes, gimmicks, and hot spots to super-heroes' love lives. Also featured are the first editions of the annual Mopee Awards and Pro/Fan Trivia Challenge from the Chicago comics convention (now Wizard World).

To cover other points, I've cobbled together what I figure are the Frequently Asked Questions about the book — both questions that actually have been asked of me and things I'm sure you want to know. It seems only right in this column that we not only ask some questions, but we make up a few, too:

Each section begins with a shot of Mr. Silver Age in all his costumed glory drawn by Jim Mooney. For more on Mooney's work, see Page 27.

So where's the book?

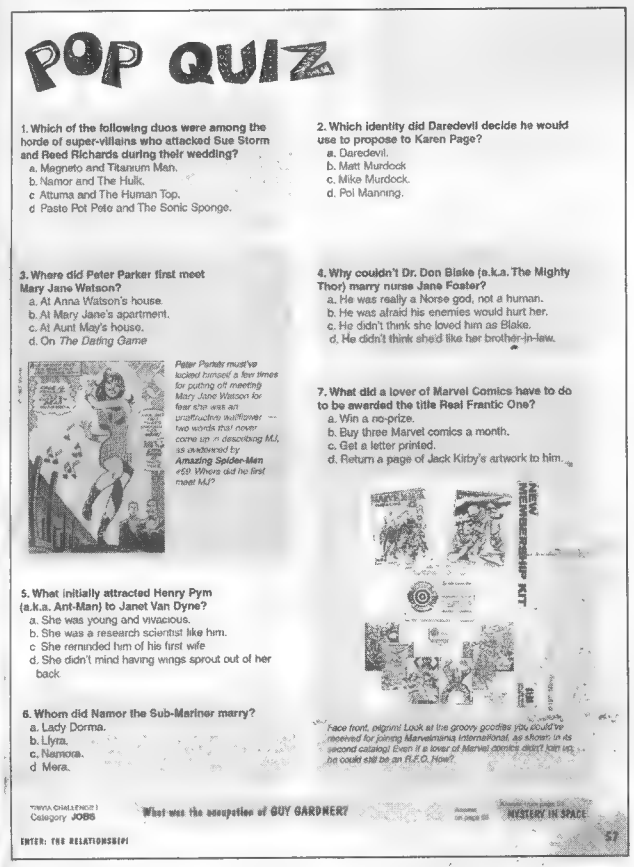
Ah, yeah, I guess we should start with the question that actually *was* the most frequently asked of me this year. The delay in publication resulted from many factors all ganging up on us. In part, it resulted from Krause's purchase by F&W Publications last year, which resulted this year in a reorganization of the book department, which in turn caused various projects to be slowed down and shuffled around, mine included. Complicating the process was the fact that this book, with its four-color extravagance and wacky layouts, is unlike most of the price-oriented collectibles books that Krause publishes, and it took longer for its design to come together than we had anticipated.

Then, the pages turned out to be far more labor-intensive to produce than the editors expected. After each page was laid out, Editor John Jackson Miller (along with ***CBG*** Editors Maggie Thompson and Brent Frankenhoff) went over them to add extra illustrations where there was space or add more pizzazz or goofiness. As a result, things started to drag, which made *BBC*'s schedule bump into other books being produced, *etc., etc.*

It was frustrating for the entire editorial team, trust me, *especially* since we ultimately weren't quite sure when the art department would finish the final details and be ready to ship it to the printer. I think it'll prove to be worth the wait and I'm hoping you'll tell me what you think when it finally gets to you.

Why is the cover different from the solicitation and ads?

Did you notice that change in recent ads? The cover promoted in the initial ads was created for use by bookstore distributors, who needed a tiny illustration to put into catalog solicitations. We designed it to give them a good idea of what we planned to do, with a few larger illustrations so they'd stand out in a tiny size. Then, of course, the final cover ended up being one of the last pieces completed, leaving us with only the original mock-up to use all this time. That's all been updated now — and the differences aren't great, but they are apparent.


POP QUIZ
1. Which of the following duos were among the horde of super-villains who attacked Sue Storm and Reed Richards during their wedding?
a. Magneto and Titanium Man.
b. Namor and The Hulk.
c Attuma and The Human Top.
d Paste Pot Pete and The Sonic Sponge.
2. Which identity did Daredevil decide he would use to propose to Karen Page?
a. Daredevil.
b. Matt Murdock
c. Mike Murdock.
d. Pol Manning.
3. Where did Peter Parker first meet Mary Jane Watson?
a. At Anna Watson's house.
b. At Mary Jane's apartment.
c. At Aunt May's house.
d. On The Dating Game
4. Why couldn't Dr. Don Blake (a.k.a. The Mighty Thor) marry nurse Jane Foster?
a. He was really a Norse god, not a human.
b. He was afraid his enemies would hurt her.
c. He didn't think she loved him as Blake.
d. He didn't think she'd like her brother-in-law.
Peter Parker must've kicked himself a few times for putting off meeting Mary Jane Watson for fear she was an unattractive wallflower — two words that never come up in describing MJ, as discovered by Amazing Spider-Man #59. Where did he first meet MJ?
5. What initially attracted Henry Pym (a.k.a. Ant-Man) to Janet Van Dyne?
a. She was young and vivacious.
b. She was a research scientist like him.
c She reminded him of his first wife
d. She didn't mind having wings sprout out of her back
6. Whom did Namor the Sub-Mariner marry?
a. Lady Dorma.
b. Llyra.
c. Namora.
d Mera.
7. What did a lover of Marvel Comics have to do to be awarded the title Real Frantic One?
a. Win a no-prize.
b. Buy three Marvel comics a month.
c. Get a letter printed.
d. Return a page of Jack Kirby's artwork to him.
NEW MEMBERSHIP KIT
Face front, pilgrim! Look at the groovy goodies you would've received for joining Marvelmania International, as shown in its second catalog! Even if a lover of Marvel comics didn't join up, he could still be an R.F.O. Now?
TRIVIA CHALLENGE! Category JOBS
What was the occupation of GUY GARDNER?
MYSTERY IN SPACE
ENTER: THE RELATIONSHIP

A Pop Quiz designed to give the flavor of the chapters involved begins each section.

Why is it called *Baby Boomer Comics*?

Krause publishes only books that have appeal to a general bookstore market in addition to being sold online and in specialty stores. To reach that audience, we needed a title that everyone could understand instantly. I told them that, if it helped get the book into stores and readers' hands, for all I cared they could call it *Harry Potter and the Long Box of Comics*. John suggested this title instead, and it nails it. We also considered putting a "Pow!" in the subtitle to make the association with the *Batman* TV show, but we decided that real Silver Age fans might skin us alive.

Why is there a price guide in it?

Krause's book department says that a price guide unquestionably improves sales in the bookstore market and it insisted one be included. We made it as inconspicuous as possible while ensuring it had up-to-date info from ***CBG***'s *2003 Standard Catalog of Comic Books*. If it helps get the book into someone's hands who wouldn't look at it otherwise, it was worth the few pages it took.

Is there any new material in the book?

There's a little bit, but it wasn't added to attract completists — and, frankly, I seriously doubt there are any ***CBG*** readers who have a *complete* collection of my articles and thus would not be interested in this collection otherwise. *I* don't even have a complete collection of my columns! And this presentation of the material blows away what was done in the original black-and-white newspaper format. (Sorry, Maggie!)

I used a previously published quiz on key early moments for DC super-heroes, so I wrote a new one about Marvel heroes to provide balance at the start of the book. I've also included the article I wrote on how Silver Age comics forecast what the 21st century would bring, which originally appeared in *Comicology* #3 (Spring 2001). And I supplemented my fond look at all those scantily clad Amazons who desperately wanted to marry or enslave Superman with a look at Green Lantern's Amazonian appeal.

There's also an introduction that provides an overview of The Silver Age, its key creators, and the era's significance, which I've gotta think you know already (but some readers might not). Basically, I needed to ensure that everyone knew whom I meant when I referred to "Julie," "Mort," and "Stan," as I am wont to do.

Which articles are your favorites?

Each one's a winner, of course. But among my favorites is the piece on the twice-told tales that Mort Weisinger created when he recycled scripts among artists and, sometimes, writers (illustrated with many examples). I also like the quizzes that lead off each chapter (including ones on bits of business by DC heroes, Marvel weddings, Silver Age hot spots, Beatles appearances, and variations on Spider-Man's origin). They cover a lot of territory and show just how wacky the Silver Age was.

But I have to admit that discussion of the scantily clad, marriage-minded Amazons has a lot of appeal. Especially when it's combined with the equally passionate article arguing that Batman outdid those occasional pulse-pounding super-adventures by being surrounded on a daily basis by various women wearing skintight outfits with his emblem on their bosoms.

Fans of Captain Comics' recent discussion about EYKIW stories will want to check out "Silver Age Superman: Everything You Know Is Wrong," a column I wrote in 1998. It details how most of the key events in Kal-El's life, from the time his rocketship took off from Krypton until he was snug in his bed as the Kent's adopted son on Earth, were changed by one Silver Age story or another.

I'm also glad I could include "Everything I Need to Know I Learned from The JLA," the first article I ever wrote for ***CBG*** (in the March 6, 1992, issue). It shows how basic moral teachings were used as underlying themes in some early Justice League stories, a Silver Age storytelling technique no longer much in use.

Other fun articles explain why DC featured so many gorillas, how *Mad* became a magazine, who used Iron Man's armor besides Tony, why Zatanna was searching for her father, why Herbie was so danged homely, how Captain Atom got his new look, how Krypto joined the Space Canine Patrol Agents, how Thor met Sif, and why Adam Strange's rocket pack doesn't burn his tootsies. Needless to say, every question asked in the ad that's been running all this time is answered *somewhere* in the book.

Are there creator credits?

There sure are. John and the editors highlighted credits wherever available in a small box (complete with Mr. Silver Age's smiling mug) alongside cover illustrations for many of the stories mentioned in the articles. It's a detail that I can't provide in the column due to lack of space, and I'm glad the creators get their due in the book. Reprint lists for each issue also are included, providing as many ways as possible for readers to check out the comics for themselves.

FOR LONG MOMENTS, THE ROBOT BRAIN CRACKLES AND BUZZES -- THERE IS A VIVID FLASH -- AND A STRANGE, AWESOME FIGURE...
I READ YOUR MIND! WELL, EARTHMAN -- AND I UNDERSTAND YOUR EVERY THOUGHT AND WORD!
THE ROBOT BRAIN... LOOK WHAT I BROUGHT -- AN ALIEN BEING!
The Silver Age is something to celebrate and remember.
Mister Silver Age Recommends...
Showcase Vol. 1, #4
DC
Then 10¢
Now $26,000
"Mystery of the Human Thunderbolt!"
• DC Silver Age Classics: Showcase #4
• Essential Showcase 1956-'58
• Flash Archives Vol. 1
• Greatest Flash Stories Ever Told
• Secret Origins Vol. 1 #1
• Secret Origins Annual #1
• Secret Origins HC collection
• Secret Origins TPB
• DC Millennium Edition: Showcase #4
22
BABY BOOMER COMICS

Each article is profusely illustrated, and creator credits, story titles, and reprint information are contained in pop-out boxes throughout the book.

Will there be a Volume Two?

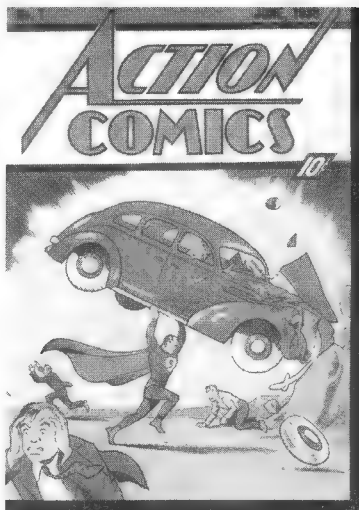
That pretty much depends on sales. Initial orders were "surprisingly strong," the book department told John, but that could be as much an indication of their low expectations for a full-color book of silliness as of any actually high numbers. Certainly, if it sells out quickly (as ***CBG***'s two editions of the *Standard Catalog of Comic Books* have done), I've gotta think they'll be interested in a new volume some time. Since this collection had room only for columns up to about 2000, and I've been writing it weekly since the beginning of 2001 and continue to do so, there are plenty more that will be ready to be collected, if reader feedback and sales warrant it.

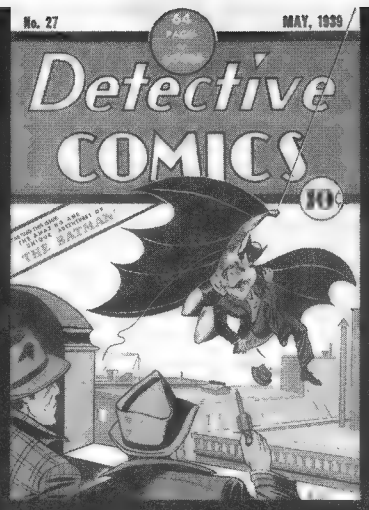
This is the part where I tell you that copies are available from bookstores, online locations, and Krause directly at (800) 258-0929, offer CBHCS. It's a mere $27.99 plus shipping and handling. Bring your copy to Wizard World Chicago on Aug. 13-15 next summer, since I'll be attending that show for certain. I'll be glad to sign it for you, while you tell John how badly he needs to find that 25th hour in the day again, so he can edit Volume Two. ✦

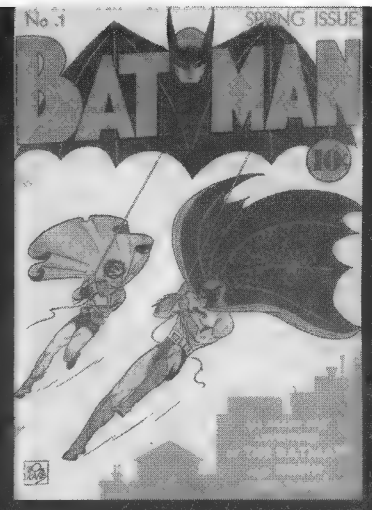
Ask Mr. Silver Age *is © 2003 by Craig Shutt.* *Send any comments to* ***craigshutt@ameritech.net****. And don't forget to double-bag this column, since it probably won't be collected in* ***Son of Baby Boomer Comics****.*

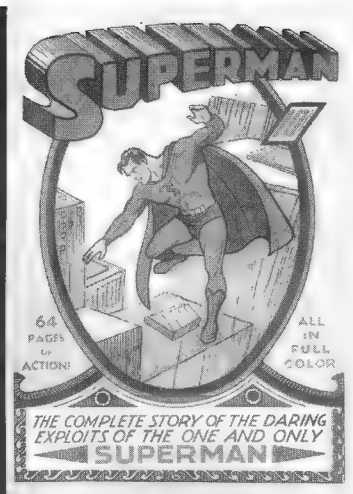
IF THIS BE MY GIMMICK!

...lo, there shall come an ENDING!









AMAZING FANTASY
12¢
15 PGS.
INTRODUCING SPIDER MAN
THOUGH THE WORLD MAY MOCK PETER PARKER, THE TIMID TEEN-AGER...
IT WILL SOON MARVEL AT THE AWESOME MIGHT OF SPIDER-MAN!
ALSO IN THIS ISSUE
AN IMPORTANT MESSAGE TO YOU, FROM THE

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We provide generous cash advances.
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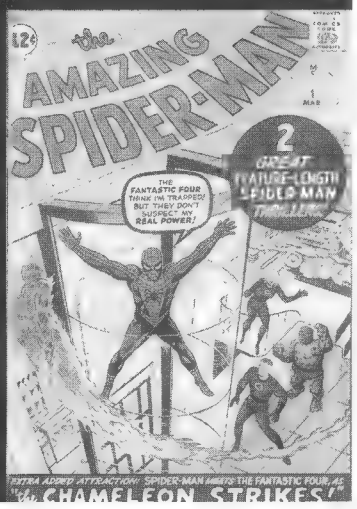
12¢
the AMAZING SPIDER-MAN
2 GREAT FEATURE-LENGTH SPIDER-MAN
THE FANTASTIC FOUR THINK I'M TRAPPED! BUT THEY DON'T SUSPECT MY REAL POWER!
EXTRA ADDED ATTRACTION! SPIDER-MAN meets THE FANTASTIC FOUR, AS "the CHAMELEON STRIKES!"

CHEAP TO STEEP II

APPETIZERS

Avengers (1963) 101-110. All VF or better. **SHARP** guide says $200+. We say..$99
Dell Giant (1960) 39 F/VF "Merry Christmas" Steal It.....$35
Disney's Christmas Parade (1962) 1 VF/NM, very nice, Xmas Cov. 1/2 off $49
Planet (1940) 40 CGC 6.5 (FN+) Cream-Off White pages, great deal $229

Aquaman (1962)

43, 46, 48, 49, 55, 56 FN-F/VF nice group $85 value, all $49

Atom (1962)

18, 33, 34, 36 VG/F-F/VF $80 value, now $45

All Star (1940)

3 No Cov, 2"x2" triangle out splash. This key commands over $3300 in G. Beat eBay, now $989
5 VG/F (except sm 1/2" triangle out cov. cor.) 1st costumed Super Heroine, Hawkgirl. Priced below VG $859
14 G/VG Save $50 .....$329

Avengers (1963)

12 FN++-F/VF Save $10 .....$59
13 FN++-F/VF Save $10 .....$59
161-181 VF/NM-NM+ Sharp! $150+ value, Only $99

Baffling Mysteries

22 VG/VG+ Slaves of Flame Queen! Only $47

Batman (1940)

52 FN+ Joker Cov. Save $40 .....$369
58 FN++ Penguin Cov. Save $50 .....$375
98 FN- Save $15 .....$119
100 VG Only $95
169, 172, 174, 175, 182, 186, 189, 190, 194, 199, Ann.7 G/VG-VG/F Guide $180, Save, All $109
204, 212, 224, 226, 229-231, 236, 240, 241, 243, 244, 276 VG+-VF Guide over $160, All $98

Bang Up (1941)

1, 2, 3 Nice file copies in paper binding, All $329

Big All American (1944)

1 VG- (Chip off sp. taped) Excellent deal $1495

Brave & Bold (1955)

42 FN (Kubert) $85
43 FN/Fn+ (Kubert) detailed Hawkman origin $115
44 FN- (Kubert) $69
Complete Hawkman Tryout Series (above) a $280 Guide value, just $239

Disney Potpourri (Heavy Discounts)

Brer Rabbit 4-Col 208 VG/F $19
Chip & Dale 4-Col 517 FN (1st one) ..$25
Cinderella 4-Col 272 VG+ $19
Disneyland Birthday 1 VG++ (Barks) ...$35
Dumbo 4-Col 668 VG $12
Goofy 4-Col 987 FN+ $12
Huey, Dewey, Louie (Jr Woodchucks) 3-5, 12, 15-17 VG+-NM- Guide $100+, All $49
Jungle Book (GK 3/68) VF $19
Lil Bad Wolf 4-Col 403 VF $35
Ludwig Von Drake 1 FN+, 4 VG, Both ..$25
Mary Poppins (68 pgs, Ph.Cov.) FN...$16
101 Dalmations 4-Col 1183 VG+.....$15
Pinocchio 4-Col 252 VG $15
Seven Dwarfs 4-Col 227 VG.....$15
Sleeping Beauty (1959) 1 VG+ $39
Snow White 4-Col 382 VG $15
W.Disney Favorite Stories (BG-B 80-07) VG- $15

Doc Savage (1966)

1 "Thousand Headed Man" F/VF Only.$45

Donald Duck - Mostly Barks

4-Col 199 NRFN (Bullet Valley) Save $30 .....$159
4-Col 223 VG (Lost in Andes) Save $20 .....$109
4-Col 318 VG+ (No Such Varmint) Reduced $55
4-Col 408 FN (Golden Helmet) Reduced $49

Any 2 or more Duck 4-Cols, Take Off 10%!

27 VG/F (Flying Horse) Only $25
28 VG+ (Robert Robot) Just $25
30, 34 FN NR $55 Value, Both $35
46 F/VF (Secret of Hondorica) Save $25 .....$79
4 Col 995 VF (Album) Save $10 .....$35
4-Col 1099, 1140 FN (Albums) Both ...$25

Famous Funnies (1934)

8 VG/F Save $50 .....$379
10 FN/FN+ Save $50 .....$449

Holiday (1940)

6 G+ (LBCole)(This is an eBay "VG"!) .$25

Hulk (1968)

107-110 FN-NR/VF $125 Guide $99
111-115 FN+-FN/VF $115 Guide $89
119-121, 123-126 FN+-VF- $120 Guide $95

Ibis (1942)

1 VG+-VG/F (Raboy) Great GA fantasy! Save $50 .....$419

Iron Man (1968)

10 VF/NM Only $49
13, 14 F/VF-NR/VF $50+ value $39
21-23, 26, 27, 100 F/VF-NM $96 value $75

Iron Man & Submariner (1968)

1 VF/NM Save $20 .....$125

Lois Lane (1958)

40-43, 45-47 VG/F-FN+ $170 Guide, All $119

Loony Tunes (1941)

1 low VG range appear (prof. rest.) Very hard to find $1395
36 VG/VG+ Only $39
38 G/VG Just $29
40 VG- Now $35
48 VG- Yours $25

Most of the following have great Wheaties baseball ads on back cov. And are high grade.

131, 143, 150 VF/NM, Each $45
132, 134, 138, 142 VF, Each $35
141, 145, 149 F/VF Each $25
146, 147 NR/VF Each.....$31
151, 158, 175, 194 F/VF Each $21
153, 166 F/VF-VF Each.....$25
155, 165 VF/NM Each $37
160, 199, 208 NR/VF-VF $82 Guide, All $75

139 FN Free to 1st purchase of 3 or more L.Tunes

Marvel Feature (1971)

1-4 FN-FN/VF Sharp! Defenders, Antman $105 Value $79

Marvel Premier (1972)

1-9, 38 FN+-F/VF Nice, $125 Value, All $95

Red Ryder (1940)

27 VG $29
28 VG/F $39
29 FN $45
30 VG $29
31 F/VF but pc. TOS, so only.....$45

Buy 2 or more Red Ryder & get free shp/ins.

Showcase (1956)

23 G/VG G.Lantern Save $30+ $149
33 VG- Aquaman, Steal It.....$49
35 VG Atom, last 10¢ Save $20+ $99
All 3 Showcase, a $380 Value, Only $259

Silver Streak (1939)

3 FA/G Origin SS $229
7 FN++ Claw vs D.Devil Classic Save hundreds! $2750
8 G+ Claw vs D.D. cont'd, Reduced...$299

Spider-Man (1963)

27 VG/F Goblin Reduced.....$75
37 F/VF Save $20.....$95
39 FN+ Goblin Only.....$109
40 FN+ Goblin Origin, Just $139
44, 46 FN/FN+ each $45, Both.....$79
48 F/VF Save $10.....$59
49 FN+ Only $48
54, 55 FN+ Each $39, Both $69
56, 58 F/VF Each $50, Both $85
59 FN+, 60 FN- $67 Value, Only $55
81, 84, 85 FN+-F/VF $80 Value.....$65
87, 89, 91, 92 FN-NR/VF $110 Value, Just $89
94 FN/FN+ Origin Spidey $29
95 F/VF, 97 VG/F, 98 FN+ (Goblin) $110 Value $89

106 FN- Free with 1st Spidey purchase over $100

107, 108, 109, 110 NRVF Each $30, All $98
111, 112, 128 F/VF-VF $87 Value, Now $69
135 FN+ Punisher.....$25
136 F/VF Goblin.....$29

Tales Of Unexpected (1956)

3 VG Save $20.....$45
19 VG Save $10.....$25
23 Glossy VG- Kirby Reduced.....$35
97, 99, 100 VG-VG/F $38 Guide, All ...$19

Tales to Astonish (1960's)

70 VG/VG+ Subby/Hulk begins.....$19
72, 73 VG/F-FN $28 Value.....$19
77 NR/VF Only $30
83, 88 F/VF Each $27, Both $39
84, 87 FN+-F/VF $42 Value.....$29
89 F/VF-VF Only.....$29
90, 91 VF Each #37 Both $65
92 FN+-F/VF Iron Man vs. Subby.....$25
93 VG+-VG/F Surfer $12
100 F/VF.....$29
101 NR VF.....$45

Terrific (1954)

14 Nice VG, but neat tape, classic cov. $75

Tip Top (1936)

3 CGC 7.0 FN/VF (Tops CGC census) Larson copy, 1st Tarzan cov. $1,000

Twilight Zone (TV)

7, 11, 12, 15, 18, 19, 22 FN-VF $125+ Value, Cheap.....$79

Uncle Sam (1941)

1 VG- Eisner, Fine Art. Origin Uncle Sam. Nice deal. Save $150 .....$479

Uncle Scrooge (1952) Barks

21, 22, 28, 30, 35, 39 VG-FN $150 value $99

Weird War (1971)

1 VF+ Good Buy $179

Wings (1940)

13 NRFN Appear. (Prof. Rest.) Cheap.$75
15 NRVG Appear. (Prof. Rest.) Cheap.$49
76 VG- Just $29

Potpourri & Late Arrivals

Batman (1940) 24 G+ Cheap $149
33 CGC 9.0 VF/NM, classic Xmas Cov $1500
Capt. Marvel (1968) issues 1-32 in 2 bound vols.....$139
Disney - MGM Original art for 1989 Christmas ornament. Cel with all main characters (10) and original gauche background. Gorgeous - truly one of a kind.....$2900
Donald Duck Merry Christmas Dell Giant 53 NM-/NM Superb! $129
Droopy Dog Nice animation dwg (TV, Filmation) Steal It $29
Huey, Dewey, Louie blue pencil, Toon Town concept, cheap $29
JLA (1961) Bound Vol. of file copies, 13-24, Reduced.....$375
Jungle 4, Page 4 Rare original Fic. House art. Cardboard backing. House artist (Sulton?) 1940.....$359
Looters of Lake Original pencil. Wright art, Barks story. Features the Jr. Woodchucks $89
Lord of Rings (Bakshi) Nice cel of Sam. matted. Reduced $69
Marvel Family 8 G/VG, Only.....$45
Mystery Men 13 VG- (2" tear bot. cov., nice pages) Scarce $99
O'Malley Disney Prod cel Aristocats (1970) head only, small $39
Purple Claw (1953) 1 VG.....$59
2 VG+, Only.....$49
Potpourri Lot: Comics, BLBs, Gumcards, PBs, even some art! Retail value over $1200, All $297
Santa Claus Funnies All Kelly
1 (1942) VG- $65
2 VG-/VG (1943), 3 (4-Col 61, 1944) VG Each $49, Both.....$85
4 (4-Col 91, 1945) VG+.....$39
4 Col. 175 (1947) VG/E $35
All 5 S.Claus Funnies, a $250 Value, Only $189
Uncle Sam Cards (1940) 30 Misc FA/G-VG $49
Wings 80 CGC 6.0 (FN) great action cov $65

Xmas Bundle

200+ Comics Mostly Superhero from the 50's-70's. Estimated guide value $4500
All, with shipping $1289
Want Just Half $689

Note: USA shp/ins $6 reg, $9 priority. Supercedes any prior list. Phone holds 7 days max. w/o down payment. Layaway available. Much more - inquire.

See our ads in CBG 1567, 1568, 1569, 1570 & 1571

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MARVEL

AMAZING SPIDER-MAN (1963)
#100 $125.00
#101 $50.00
#102 $35.00
#103-118 $6.50
#119, 120 $16.00
#121 $175.00
#122 $200.00
#123, 125-128 $8.00
#124 $14.00
#129 $250.00
#130-133 $12.00
#134 $15.00
#135 $12.50
#136 $15.00
#137 $16.00
#138-141 $6.00
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The best is the worst, Conclusion:

Love, 'Classics,' and The Association of Comics Magazine Publishers, Inc.

By **Steven E. Mitchell**

Last week: *This history of anti-comic-book pressures continues with the conclusion part of an article that originally appeared in* ***CBG*** *for July 19, 1985. In a search for alternatives to popular but widely criticized "crime comics," publishers looked at other genres. One of the types was the educational comic, and* ***Stories by Famous Authors Illustrated*** *was released.*

In a tirade reminiscent of his attack on all comics two years earlier, John Mason Brown condemned the *Famous Authors* version of Shakespeare as "a travesty of itself, and ... almost a travesty of the ineptitudes of comics, too." The coloring and drawing were equally bad, and, he said, "the witches were Dogpatch ugly without being Dogpatch funny." Fredric Wertham, in a comment on Brown's article and the comic book that inspired it, was more to the point in his criticism. In the Sept. 2 *SRL*, he dismissed the *Macbeth* adaptation as "just another crime comic book." The failure of the educational comic book represented more than just the death of a laudable, if somewhat ill-conceived, experiment. Its failure removed one more weapon the beleaguered comic-book industry could wield in its defense.

In his postmortem on Catholic comics in the October 1951 *Catholic School Journal*, Don Sharkey reported he had been able to locate only one "wholesome" comic book on the newsstands: *Classics Illustrated*. According to Sharkey, children were not interested in the mundane "true" comics: "Children want exciting stories in their comic book ... The most gifted script writer in the world cannot convince children that there is anything very exciting about the lives of Harry Truman, Robert Taft, or John Foster Dulles."

Classics succeeded, at least financially, by emphasizing the exciting elements of the fiction it appropriated. After a perusal of #40, based on three Edgar Allan Poe mysteries, Sharkey indignantly said it contained "several brutal murders that are more horrible than anything in Superman ... Are such things acceptable if they are from the 'classics'?"

John Mason Brown defined *Classics* as "comics masquerading as educational which have sought to turn ... defenseless novels ... into blood brothers of L'il Abner, the Lone Ranger, Captain Marvel, Gandy and Sourpuss, Flash Gordon, and Mandrake the Magician." He pleaded with publishers to "let us have comics which are comics ... Leave the masterpieces unraped."

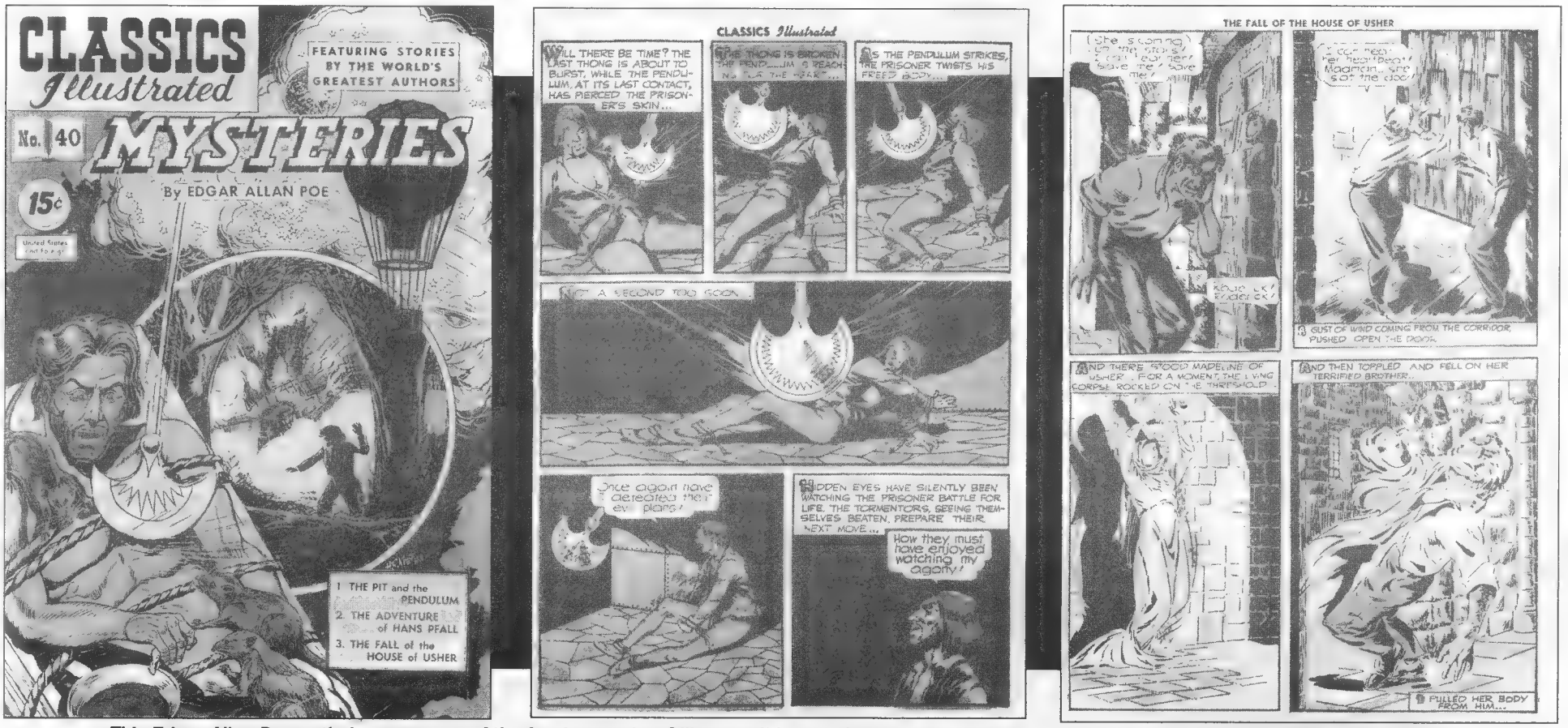
As always, Wertham provided the last word on the issue of educational comics: "*Corruptu optimi pessimi*. Freely translated: the comic-book version of the best is the worst."

In December 1948, anti-comic-book forces scored their most impressive victory — in the passage of Los Angeles County Comic Book Ordinance No. 5201. Comic-book publishers regarded the countywide ban on "illustrated crime books" as a dangerous precedent for other localities and quickly began efforts to counter the prohibition.

Several unaffiliated publishers allied with the ACMP to challenge the statute in a civil suit, but their injunction was denied. The ACMP then obtained two criminal convictions under the provisions of the ordinance as a test case. On Dec. 28, 1949, the Appellate Department of the Superior Court ruled that the ordinance was unconstitutional, despite the presentation of an affidavit and 29 exhibits by Fredric Wertham in support of the prosecution. The wording of the ordinance was described in the decision as so vague that textbook descriptions of the assassination of Abraham Lincoln might also be banned under it.

Their success in the Los Angeles action was regarded with almost delirious optimism by ACMP officials. Organization President Leverett S. Gleason expressed his hope that the decision would "bring a moment of calm deliberation to the hysterical fanatics who have sought to escape complex social and psychological problems by the expedient of blaming everything on comics magazines."

ACMP General Director Schultz asserted the hysteria of 1948 had ended and "sanity is creeping into the entire picture on the comics ... Parents are beginning to realize the problem is not solved by quick, easy panacea like legislation, banning or burning of comic books." However, Schultz also credited the Los Angeles ordinance with the deletion of the word "crime" from a number of titles (from more than 100 to "a relative handful") and a "marked drop" in comic-book sales in the last half of 1949 as a result.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AS THE PENDULUM STRIKES, THE PRISONER TWISTS HIS FREED BODY...
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Once again have defeated their evil plans!
HIDDEN EYES HAVE SILENTLY BEEN WATCHING THE PRISONER BATTLE FOR LIFE. THE TORMENTORS, SEEING THEMSELVES BEATEN, PREPARE THEIR NEXT MOVE...
How they must have enjoyed watching my agony!
THE FALL OF THE HOUSE OF USHER
(She's coming for me Gods! I can't bear it! Save me!
KOUR-LEY! KADELEK!
I can hear her heart beat! Madman, she's at the door!
A GUST OF WIND COMING FROM THE CORRIDOR PUSHED OPEN THE DOOR.
AND THERE STOOD MADELINE OF USHER. FOR A MOMENT, THE LIVING CORPSE ROCKED ON THE THRESHOLD...
AND THEN TOPPLED AND FELL ON HER TERRIFIED BROTHER...
PULLED HER BODY FROM HIM...

This Edgar Allan Poe anthology was one of the few issues that Gilberton did not redraw for fresh sales. The comic book was simply retired in the 1950s.

In 1949, the ACMP began to display its long-promised seal on the covers of member comics that complied with its standards. The seal consisted of a rectangle with "Authorized A.C.M.P." printed in it, set above the top point of a five-pointed star inside of which was printed, "Conforms to the Comics Code."

Location and prominence of the seal on member comics' covers varied. An advertising and promotional page for the ACMP appeared in some E.C. comics and extolled the editorial virtues of "decency and good taste" and declared that the seal would be affixed to "only the best comics."

By its cooperation with "Parent-Teacher Associations, educational groups, welfare organizations, women's clubs, religious organizations of every faith, and others interested in the American way of life," the ACMP pledged to pursue the dual goals of entertainment and information. Self-regulation was promoted as the solution to the problems faced by comic books, and children were urged to show the ad to their parents, "so they too will understand what the better comic magazine publishers are doing to raise their standards." In the event of discussion about comics within their community, young readers were encouraged to ask interested parties to write directly to the association for information. The ACMP also brought its case directly to the public. Ruder and Finn, a public relations firm, was retained to discredit anti-comic-book activists, especially Wertham.

In an address before the National Conference of Social Workers in 1949, Schultz charged that critics of comic books sought only publicity and that their attacks on comics were "without credible evidence." In fact, Schultz continued, "statistics on juvenile delinquency indicate a sharp drop for the past several years coincident with a great rise in comics sales."

Lev Gleason expressed his concern about the "insidious effort in some quarters to set up an intellectual dictatorship over the reading habits of the American people." In a letter to the *New York Times* (Feb. 5,1949), he stated that 40% to 60% of all comics were bought by adults, and action against comics would only serve to dictate their reading tastes.

Gleason also wrote in the September 1952 *Today's Health* that "the strict code of ethics" established by the ACMP had resulted in the elimination of "brutality, sex, sadism and cruelty." He defended the comic book as a new medium that was still in the process of maturing. Until the process was completed, parents had to recognize that a child whose powers of discrimination were undeveloped could not select the good comics from the vast numbers available. He advocated parental selection, which would enable children to develop selective judgment and, by their buying power, force the publishers to continue their efforts at improvement. Gleason's *Today's Health* article was a remarkably candid admission of the problems of comic books and a well-reasoned, responsible solution to those problems. For the ACMP, however, the time had passed for any solutions.

Even as, efforts to rally support to the ACMP and combat continuing criticisms were mounted, defections from the group finally crippled it. Two publishers, E.C. and Avon, resigned rather than conform to code standards. By 1951, according to Schultz, the association was so depleted that it no longer existed as a regulatory or review body, but only as a fact-gathering and fact-dispensing organization.

Dr. Charles F. Gosnell, a member of the ACMP Advisory Committee, recalled, "the advisory committee faded away after a few years." In 1954, the ACMP employed only two persons: a general secretary and Schultz, with a budget of $15,000 a year. Although the association still had about a dozen members, most were distributors, printers, and engravers. Only three *publisher* members remained: Famous Funnies, Lev Gleason, and Atlas, which had joined about 1952. (In May 1947, the ACMP had included 35 publishers.)

"The ACMP code was not clear in its limitations or standards."

There was no review of member publications by Schultz, and the publishers applied the code seal to their comics at their own discretions. The Senate Subcommittee to Investigate Juvenile Delinquency denounced the practice of using the seal in this manner as "highly questionable and calculated to mislead the parents of the children buying such comic books." According to the subcommittee, the ACMP failed in its attempt at self-regulation because its code was not clear in its limitations or standards. The public was also not aware of or convinced of the need to restrict purchases to those comics that carried the seal and not sufficiently educated in the meaning of the code or the purpose of the organization. Schultz attributed the failure of the association solely to the defection of the larger publishers after 1947.

(When the U.S. Army attempted to prohibit the sale on U.S. bases of comic books not approved by the "Schultz Office," they were forced — by the non-member publishers who represented the majority of all-comic books circulated — to withdraw the ban.)

The subcommittee agreed that, by their action, the industry leaders permitted other, less-reputable publishers "to hide behind the skirts ... of the reputable publisher." Because the majority of the publishers refused to adhere to the code, the organization became meaningless. Finally, there was not sufficient enforcement machinery to implement the code or impose sanctions for non-adherence, and the association was too closely tied to the publishers it sought to police.

Dissatisfaction with the ACMP and its code was widespread from the beginning. Wertham attributed the announcement of the code on July 1, 1948, directly to the publication of his research conclusions earlier that year. He labeled the code further proof of the conspiracy to confuse and misinform parents by paid experts and defenders. The entire attempt at self-regulation was dismissed as a failure, and Wertham claimed that, under .the ACMP, objectionable comics had actually increased. James V. Bennett, director of the Federal Bureau of Prisons, criticized the code as too broad and ridiculed the point that dealt with women's wearing apparel. Their clothing could not be more revealing than the ordinary bathing suit, "but they can be dressed in bathing clothes, although in a cornfield, building or any place else."

Both Bennett and the U.S. Conference of Mayors pronounced ineffective any association that failed to represent 75% of an industry. Dorothy Barclay of the *New York Times* found comic books with the code seal "as filled with violence as any of their predecessors."

On Jan. 21, 1949, the Long Island Federation of Women's Clubs concluded that comic books had not

Gleason's titles kept the seal

improved under the code. Delegates were urged to write their Congressmen to demand that comic books be kept off the market until publishers complied with promised standards.

Dr. Hilde L. Mosse contended the association was a "smoke screen," that crime comics were unaffected by the code and, together with jungle comics, they continued "to propagate race hatred and sadism." A New York legislative committee found that "many of the worst" comics were approved under the code, which was described as "ineffectual [and] unworkable."

The immediate aftermath of the second comic-book crisis paralleled the stalemate that had followed Sterling North's original attack in 1940. Many publishers may have, once again, expected the controversy to subside after token movements toward self-regulation and the temporary removal of some titles from newsstands. At least one unnamed executive at Fox, publishers of what Dave McGuire described as "the worst of all comic book magazines," expressed an unconcern that transcended arrogance. Asked to defend his company's more lurid titles, he smugly remarked: "There are more morons than people, you know."

Warren B. Kuhn, a writer for such Hillman titles as *Real Clue Crime Stories* and *Airboy Comics*, was more conservative in his advice in the February 1951 *The Writer*. Kuhn cautioned would-be comic-book writers to adhere to the ACMP guidelines, which he paraphrased, because, "there are too many social societies watching the comics with sharp, censor-lidded eyes."

While Kuhn disparaged the informal "social societies," pressure from these groups was often translated into official action, usually at the municipal or county level. As the dispute continued and intensified, these local pressures eventually reached legislators in state capitals and evoked responses original to this installment of the controversy.

In the 1949 session of the Massachusetts legislature, a bill was introduced to establish a five-man legislative commission to study proposed action to curb objectionable comics. However, it was designated "next annual session," which, in effect, killed it. Two other bills aimed at comics were disposed of in the same manner.

New York anti-comic-book partisans were more successful in their efforts. On March 29, 1949, both houses of the state legislature adopted a resolution that created the New York State Joint Legislative Committee to Study the Publication of Comics.

The combatants now had a battleground. ✦

THE GUIDE

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Why the newsstand market collapsed

Chuck Rozanski discusses what role comics shops might have played in this.

Tales from the Database, Page 44

The ways people are buying, selling, and trading classic comic books today!

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Auctions closed between Nov. 23-29, 2003 All met their reserve price. Populations reported are as of Aug. 13.

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$3,161

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$2,370

***Strange Worlds* #5**
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$2,225

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$2,213

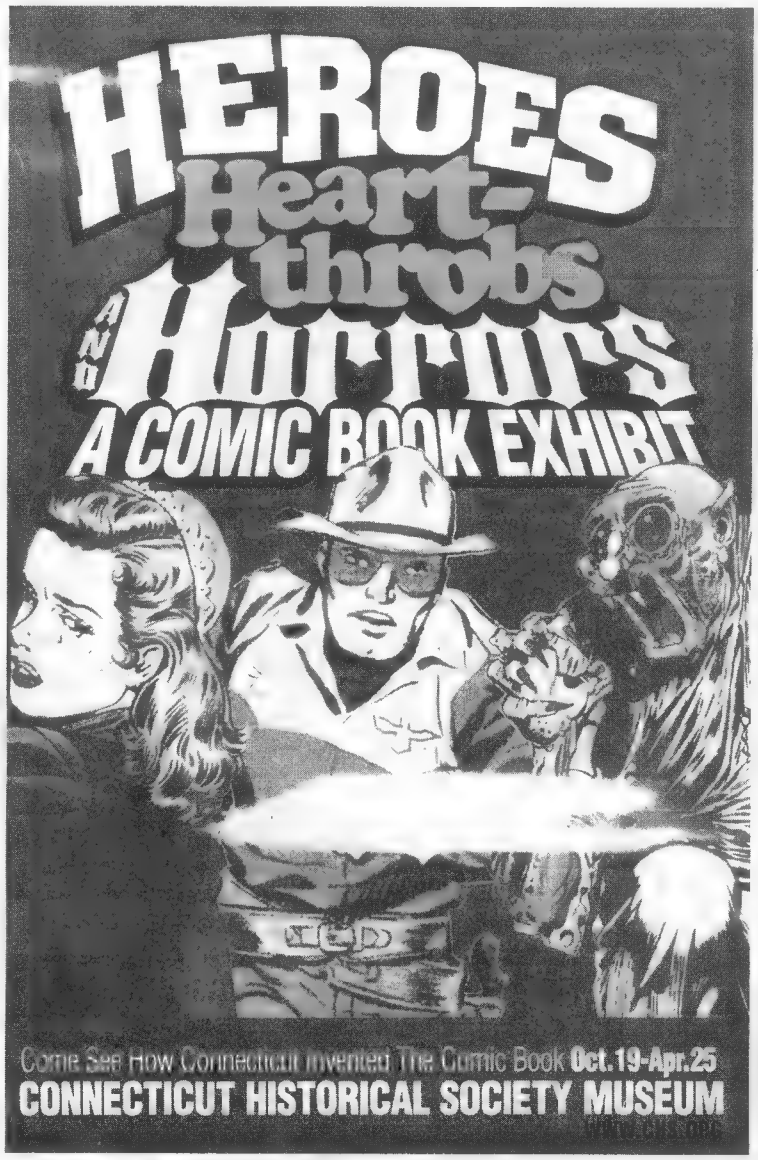
2004 marks 70 years of comic books

Connecticut Historical Society celebrates states connection to the industry

The Connecticut Historical Society has opened its doors to comics fans with its "Heroes, Heartthrobs, and Horrors: Celebrating Connecticut's Invention of the American Comic Book" exhibit. The event will run through April 25 at The Connecticut Historical Society Museum in Hartford, Conn.

The Eastern Color Printing Company is located in Waterbury, Conn. *Famous Funnies* #1 (dated July) went on sale in May 1934. Begun by Eastern Color salesman Max C. Gaines, the series ran for 218 issues over the ensuing 21 years, was the first monthly comic book, and was priced at what became a decades-long industry standard: 10¢.

Eastern Color was, in fact, bound up with many pivotal events in the development of comic-book production, and the Hartford exhibit will feature information on was put together to celebrate the printing of the first regular comic book, *Funnies on Parade.* The publication was released in 1933 by In 1928, Eastern Color also printed what is considered one of the first comic books. *The Funnies*, a tabloid-sized collection of newspaper reprints, is considered the first four-color monthly comic book to be printed on newsstands.



The exhibit will focus on Connecticut's role in the modern comic book by exploring the Golden Age of comics.

A promotional letter to media begins, "Holy Comic Book," but exhibit information will focus more seriously on Connecticut's contributions to the art form, including:

- Eastern Color's printing of such key developments as the first modern-format comic book and the first modern comic book sold on newsstands. By 1954, the Hartford Courant stated that, of the 65 million comics printed each month in America, about 40% came from Eastern's presses.
- The Bridgeport, Conn., Chemical Color Plate firm provided much of the color separation for the industry from the 1960s until the advent of digital coloring.
- Westport, Conn., was home to the Famous Artists School, which trained many who went on to become comics pros.
- Connecticut was home to offices of comic-book companies including Quality Comics Group, Fawcett Publications, Fiction House, and Charlton.

Moreover, wrote CHS Researcher Andrew Goldstein, "Connecticut continues to contribute to the comic-book industry today as the home of many prominent comic-book artists and writers. Throughout the history of the industry, many artists have chosen to live in the bucolic suburbs of Connecticut rather than face the hectic pace of the New York City lifestyle. This practice continues to this day, with many artists choosing to commute while working for the New York-based publishers."

Upcoming CHS programs involving the exhibit include "Create a Comic Strip" 2-4 p.m. Jan. 18. Participants will learn to draw their own comic strips from Brad Gilchrist, the cartoonist of *Nancy* and the creator of *The Hartford Courant*'s Connecticut Fan.

From 7 to 8 p.m. on Feb. 9, the museum at One Elizabeth St., Hartford, will feature "The Good, the Bad, the Banned: Censorship, Comic Books, and the Media at Large," a discussion of the history of censorship in comics. Amy Nyberg, the author of *Seal of Approval: The History of the Comics Code*, will hold a panel discussion with *Hartford Courant* columnist Denis Horgan and others.

Both programs are $6 for adults, $3 for seniors, students, and children ages 6-17, and free for children under 6. Seating may be reserved by calling the museum at (860) 236-5621, ext. 238. ✦

INSIDE THIS SECTION

● **Resale Report** .....38 | ● **Tales from the Database** by Chuck Rozanski....44

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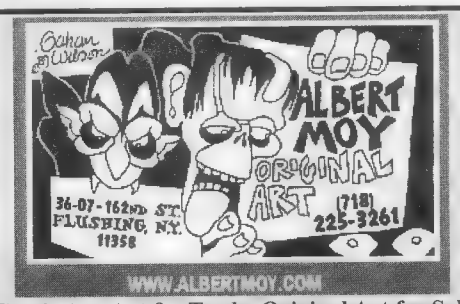


Comic Art, Art for Trade, Original Art for Sale

EYE ON eBay

Nov. 23-29, 2003 CGC auctions

by **Darryl Buchanan**

Auction volume dropped back a bit after last week's huge Heritage Auction. However, setting aside the impact of the Heritage Auction last week, eBay auction volume climbed about 10% — to 1,539 auctions this week versus the average of about 1,400 the last four weeks.

GOLDEN AGE: Topping this week's Golden Age auctions is a rare and unusual issue: *Strange Worlds* #5. The copy in 9.2 (NM-) is the best and only copy of this issue offered on eBay. It brought $2,225. There have only been two or three auctions each for most of the issues from #1 to #9 in the last year and a half on eBay.

The next Golden Age comic book is the 18th highest seller on this week's list. Last week's Heritage Auction seems to have swept up a lot of the high-priced Golden Age material. At #18 was a copy of *Flash Comics* #86 in 8.0 (VF) condition. The auction brought $1,763.

Next was a copy of *All-Winners Comics* #16 in 9.2 (NM-) condition. The copy sold for $1,355.

Finally, on the Golden Age list, there is a copy of *Batman* #6 in 6.5 (FN+) condition that sold for $1,275.

SILVER AGE AND NEWER: An *X-Men* #94 in 9.6 (NM+) tops this week's Silver Age sales. The book sold for $6,900 — just missing the record price of $6,988 set three months ago. Sales of high-grade copies of this issue have been hot the last few months. Issues in 9.4 and 9.6 condition are selling for 30% to 40% more than they were this time last year.

Next up was a copy of the ever-popular *Incredible Hulk* #181 in 9.6 (NM+) condition. This copy went for $4,250. Prices on 9.6 copies have been holding steady at this level for about the last six months.

Two copies of *Amazing Spider-Man* #1 come next on the list. The first copy was in 6.5 (FN+) condition and brought $3,185. The second copy was in 6.0 (FN) condition and brought $3,161.

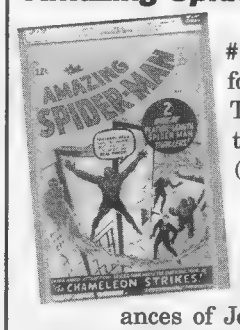
IN DEPTH: This week, there were 1,539 auctions recorded receiving bids, versus 1,862 last week and 1,310 two weeks ago. Total dollar bidding was $231,186, versus $895,023 last week and $203,329 two weeks ago. There were 37 auctions receiving bids of $1,000 or more, compared with 158 last week and 27 two weeks ago.

Darryl Buchanan can be reached at ***dbuchanan@thecomicsheet.com.***

Noteworthy CGC Closing Prices on eBay (All copies are unrestored)

Issue	Grade	Price
Action Comics #64	2.0	$139
Action Comics #80	6.5	$308
Action Comics #80	3.0	$110
Action Comics #101	5.5	$326
Action Comics #384	9.4	$80
Action Comics #390	9.4	$80
Action Comics #399	9.4	$80
Action Comics #400	9.4	$103
Adventure Comics #105	9.2	$1,226
Adventure Comics #247	5.5	$400
All-American Comics #72	7.5	$301
All Top Comics #8	4.0	$337
All Winners Comics #16	9.2	$1,355
All-Star Comics #21	7.0	$677
All-Star Comics #23	6.5	$500
All-Star Comics #56	5.0	$283
Amazing Adventures #1	4.0	$134
Amazing Fantasy #15	5.0	$2,000
Amazing Spider-Man #1	6.5	$3,185
Amazing Spider-Man #1	6.0	$3,161
Amazing Spider-Man #1	5.0	$2,113
Amazing Spider-Man #2	7.5	$1,770
Amazing Spider-Man #3	8.0	$2,030
Amazing Spider-Man #3	5.0	$585
Amazing Spider-Man #9	8.0	$1,175
Amazing Spider-Man #12	8.5	$678
Amazing Spider-Man #13	7.0	$307
Amazing Spider-Man #13	5.5	$238
Amazing Spider-Man #14	8.5	$2,008
Amazing Spider-Man #14	7.5	$1,046
Amazing Spider-Man #14	5.5	$405
Amazing Spider-Man #14	4.5	$341
Amazing Spider-Man #14	1.0	$130
Amazing Spider-Man #16	8.5	$655
Amazing Spider-Man #18	8.0	$434
Amazing Spider-Man #19	8.0	$260
Amazing Spider-Man #19	6.5	$125
Amazing Spider-Man #20	8.0	$330
Amazing Spider-Man #20	6.5	$162
Amazing Spider-Man #21	7.5	$148
Amazing Spider-Man #22	7.0	$91
Amazing Spider-Man #23	9.2	$985
Amazing Spider-Man #24	8.0	$188
Amazing Spider-Man #26	8.5	$283
Amazing Spider-Man #27	9.0	$413
Amazing Spider-Man #27	8.0	$195
Amazing Spider-Man #28	9.0	$711
Amazing Spider-Man #28	7.0	$240
Amazing Spider-Man #30	9.4	$1,026
Amazing Spider-Man #30	8.5	$138
Amazing Spider-Man #32	9.4	$665
Amazing Spider-Man #32	8.5	$169
Amazing Spider-Man #33	9.2	$280
Amazing Spider-Man #34	9.0	$235
Amazing Spider-Man #39	9.0	$425
Amazing Spider-Man #42	8.5	$194
Amazing Spider-Man #43	9.0	$168
Amazing Spider-Man #45	9.6	$787
Amazing Spider-Man #45	9.4	$490
Amazing Spider-Man #47	9.0	$123
Amazing Spider-Man #47	8.5	$92
Amazing Spider-Man #50	7.5	$188
Amazing Spider-Man #56	9.4	$399
Amazing Spider-Man #59	9.6	$595
Amazing Spider-Man #62	9.4	$211
Amazing Spider-Man #76	9.6	$610
Amazing Spider-Man #98	9.0	$101
Amazing Spider-Man #98	8.5	$106
Amazing Spider-Man #100	9.4	$419
Amazing Spider-Man #100	9.4	$400
Amazing Spider-Man #100	9.0	$168
Amazing Spider-Man #103	9.4	$210
Amazing Spider-Man #120	9.4	$168
Amazing Spider-Man #121	9.6	$1,358
Amazing Spider-Man #121	9.2	$276
Amazing Spider-Man #121	8.0	$129
Amazing Spider-Man #122	9.6	$961
Amazing Spider-Man #122	9.0	$238
Amazing Spider-Man #122	8.0	$145
Amazing Spider-Man #129	9.4	$1,025
Amazing Spider-Man #129	9.2	$549
Amazing Spider-Man #129	9.2	$511
Amazing Spider-Man #129	9.2	$501
Amazing Spider-Man #129	9.0	$356
Amazing Spider-Man #129	6.5	$158
Amazing Spider-Man #129	6.0	$132
Amazing Spider-Man #135	9.4	$222
Amazing Spider-Man #140	9.6	$129
Amazing Spider-Man #149	9.6	$342
Amazing Spider-Man #154	9.6	$99
Amazing Spider-Man #157	9.6	$99
Amazing Spider-Man #238	9.6	$88
Amazing Spider-Man #238	9.4	$93
Amazing Spider-Man #300	9.8	$580
Amazing Spider-Man #300	9.6	$203
Amazing Spider-Man #300	9.4	$115
Amazing Spider-Man #300	9.4	$99
Amazing Spider-Man #300	9.4	$86
Amazing Spider-Man #300	9.0	$80
Amazing Spider-Man Annual #2	6.5	$92
Amazing Spider-Man Vol. 2 #36	9.9	$252
Aquaman #50	9.4	$209
Aspen #1	9.9	$150
Atom #18	9.4	$128
Avengers #1	7.0	$1,175
Avengers #2	6.0	$150
Avengers #3	7.0	$228
Avengers #3	7.0	$204
Avengers #4	8.0	$600
Avengers #100	9.6	$581
Avengers #100	9.2	$150
Avengers Annual #10	9.8	$118
Batman #6	6.5	$1,275
Batman #14	6.0	$760
Batman #16	4.5	$610
Batman #19	8.0	$999
Batman #23	4.0	$470
Batman #26	8.0	$652
Batman #49	5.0	$363
Batman #66	4.5	$116
Batman #227	9.4	$355
Batman #234	9.4	$407
Batman (2nd Print) #608	9.8	$140
Batman (2nd Print) #608	9.8	$113
Batman (2nd Print) #608	9.8	$104
Batman (RRP) #608	9.6	$1,225
Batman (RRP) #608	9.6	$1,126
Batman (RRP) #608	9.6	$860
Batman/Superman (RRP) #1	9.8	$538
Black Cat Comics #6	9.2	$204
Boy Comics #56	9.4	$149
Boy Commandos #1	5.5	$726
Brave And The Bold #50	9.4	$610
Buccaneers (Canadian Edition) #4	8.5	$152
Captain Action #1	9.4	$192
Captain America #100	9.2	$449
Captain America #100	7.0	$113
Captain America #109	9.4	$155
Captain America #117	9.4	$323
Captain America #143	9.6	$154
Conan The Barbarian #22	9.6	$175
Conan The Barbarian #27	9.6	$84
Conan The Barbarian #28	9.6	$113
Conan The Barbarian #37	9.6	$114
Congo Bill #4	4.5	$175
Crime Detective #1	6.5	$81
Crime Does Not Pay #43	9.2	$255
Crimes By Women #13	7.0	$278
Danger Girl #1	9.8	$103
Danger Trail #1	7.0	$356
Daredevil #1	7.5	$1,225
Daredevil #1	3.0	$233
Daredevil #4	8.5	$256
Daredevil #43	9.4	$234
Daredevil #168	9.2	$131
Daredevil #169	9.6	$109
Dark Mysteries #10	5.0	$225
DC Special #4	9.6	$128
Dead Of Night #1	9.4	$84
Defenders #1	9.0	$92
Defenders #1	9.0	$86
Detective Comics #321	9.6	$600
Detective Comics #327	9.4	$1,100
Detective Comics #403	9.8	$400
Detective Comics #407	9.4	$171
Detective Comics #409	9.4	$225
Detective Comics #415	9.4	$96
Devil Dinosaur #1	9.8	$94
Dick Tracy Monthly #2	8.0	$82

Amazing Spider-Man #1 sells for 2,113



A copy of *Amazing Spider-Man* #1 (Mar 63) graded 5.0 (VG/F) sold for $2,113 on Nov. 28 on eBay. There are 181 copies graded better, with the highest graded 9.8 (NM/M).

The issue, written by Stan Lee and drawn by Jack Kirby, features a retelling of the origin of Spider-Man and the first appearances of John Jameson, J. Jonah Jameson, and The Chameleon.

– Nate Melby

ComicLink Comments

By **Josh Nathanson**

ALL-STAR COMICS #38

DC • Dec 1947 • Cover 10¢

In the post-war years, The Justice Society's cases got stranger and stranger, with this invasion by various historical renegades being one of the oddest.

To date, CGC has graded 16 copies with this being the highest by far. The next highest-graded copy is in 9.0. The sold copy came from the Pennsylvania Pedigree.

SOLD IN NM+ (CGC 9.6) FOR: $7,350

AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #1

Marvel • Mar 1963 • Cover 12¢

Utilizing a pair of stories that appear to have been slated for another anthology title, *Amazing Spider-Man* #1 was launched when sales on *Amazing Fantasy* #15 were received at Marvel. Featuring a visit with The Fantastic Four and a battle with The Chameleon, the issue established more of Spidey's supporting cast.

SOLD IN VG (CGC 4.0) FOR: $1,650

AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #7

Marvel • Dec 1963 • Cover 12¢

Amazing Spider-Man is one of the most heavily traded series on ComicLink, and early appearances by major Spidey villains always sell well. With speculation still running as to who the third film's villain will be, The Vulture is a front-runner, making his early appearances climb in value.

SOLD IN NM (CGC 9.4) FOR: $5,500

AMAZING FANTASY #15

Marvel • Aug 1962 • Cover 12¢

Moderate professional restoration lowered the price of this issue to less than half what an unrestored copy in the same grade would have brought on ComicLink. With its key status, this issue is a prime candidate for restoration, even with the significant reduction in final price.

SOLD IN VF+ (CGC 8.0) FOR: $3,975

AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #1

Marvel • Mar 1963 • Cover 12¢

A second copy of *Amazing Spider-Man* #1 that recently sold on ComicLink illustrates the difference just one grade can make in final value realized. This 4.5 outsold the 4.0 above by $650.

To date, CGC has graded 50 copies in 4.0 and 35 in 4.5, with more than 100 copies graded higher.

SOLD IN VG+ (CGC 4.5) FOR: $2,300

AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #17

Marvel • Oct 1964 • Cover 12¢

Spider-Man was aided by The Human Torch in his second battle with The Green Goblin, although the Goblin would see it differently when he recalled the battle in *Amazing Spider-Man* #39.

To date, CGC has graded 18 copies in 9.2, with 17 graded higher, the highest a quartet in 9.6.

SOLD IN NM+ (CGC 9.2) FOR: $1,600

Josh Nathanson is CEO of ComicLink (www.comiclink.com), an online marketplace where a wide selection of condition-verified, investment-quality comic books, comic art, and related memorabilia are bought and sold. For more information, or to sell items, e-mail Josh Nathanson at ***buysell@comiclink.com*** *or call (718) 423-6079. You can see the new, automated version of ComicLink at* ***www.comiclinkexpress.com.***

EXCLUSIVE CGC PRICE INDEX

For CGC-graded comics auctioned, ***Comics Buyer's Guide*** compared the differences between the **median closing price offered** at each grade and ***The 2003 CBG Checklist & Price Guide*** price for an ungraded NM copy.

COMICS PUBLISHED BEFORE 1990

CGC comics graded **9.9** **"Mint"** ...sold for a median price of **NM+2566%** (or **26.7** times the NM guide price) **in the quarter beginning August 1**
*Sample: **25** (96% of all) 9.9 copies sold on eBay*

CGC comics graded **9.8** **"Near Mint/ Mint"** ...sold for a median price of **NM+920%** (or **10.2** times the NM guide price) **in the quarter beginning August 1**
*Sample: **943** (83% of all) 9.8 copies sold on eBay*

CGC comics graded **9.6** **"Near Mint+"** ...sold for a median price of **NM+509%** (or **5.1** times the NM guide price) **in the quarter beginning August 1**
*Sample: **2,208** (67% of all) 9.6 copies sold on eBay*

CGC comics graded **9.4** **"Near Mint"** ...sold for a median price of **NM+298%** (or **3.98** times the NM guide price) **in the quarter beginning August 1**
*Sample: **2,316** (84% of all) 9.4 copies sold on eBay*

CBG's definition: *Barely perceptible wear, tight spine. Some discoloration acceptable in older comics.*

CGC comics graded **9.2** **"Near Mint-"** ...sold for a median price of **NM+128%** (or **2.3** times the NM guide price) **in the quarter beginning August 1**
*Sample: **1,397** (86% of all) 9.2 copies sold on eBay*

CGC comics graded **9.0** **"Very Fine/ Near Mint"** ...sold for a median price of **NM+63%** (or **1.6** times the NM guide price) **in the quarter beginning August 1**
*Sample: **1,183** (86% of all) 9.0 copies sold on eBay*

CGC comics graded **8.5** **"Very Fine+"** ...sold for a median of **NM +11%** (or **1.1** times the NM guide price) **in the quarter beginning August 1**
*Sample: **929** (85% of all) 8.5 copies sold on eBay*

CGC comics graded **8.0** **"Very Fine"** ...sold for a median price of **NM -16%** (or **0.84** times the NM guide price) **in the quarter beginning August 1**
*Sample: **774** (83% of all) 8.0 copies sold on eBay*

CBG's definition: *Slight creases, wrinkles at staples, some loss of gloss. Otherwise a flat, clean issue.*

CGC comics graded **7.5** **"Very Fine-"** ...sold for a median price of **NM -37%** (or **0.63** times the NM guide price) **in the quarter beginning August 1**
*Sample: **586** (81% of all) 7.5 copies sold on eBay*

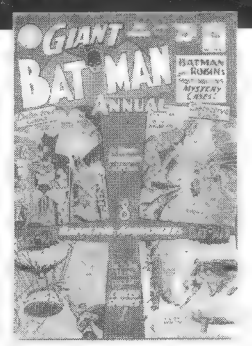
CGC comics graded **7.0** **"Fine/ Very Fine"** ...sold for a median price of **NM -48%** (or **0.52** times the NM guide price) **in the quarter beginning August 1**
*Sample: **464** (81% of all) 7.0 copies sold on eBay*

CGC comics graded **6.0** **"Fine"** ...sold for a median price of **NM -66%** (or **0.34** times the NM guide price) **in the quarter beginning August 1**
*Sample: **267** (79% of all) 6.0 copies sold on eBay*

CBG's definition: *Cover worn but clean; no tape or writing. Stress lines, more rounded corners.*

Issue	Grade	Price
Doom Patrol #86	8.0	**$91**
Eternals #1	9.8	**$128**
Fantastic Four #1	2.0	**$913**
Fantastic Four #2	7.0	**$600**
Fantastic Four #16	9.0	**$989**
Fantastic Four #21	9.0	**$324**
Fantastic Four #24	9.2	**$461**
Fantastic Four #25	8.5	**$405**
Fantastic Four #28	7.0	**$135**
Fantastic Four #35	9.0	**$164**
Fantastic Four #41	8.5	**$83**
Fantastic Four #44	9.2	**$129**
Fantastic Four #44	9.2	**$90**
Fantastic Four #47	9.0	**$139**
Fantastic Four #48	9.0	**$510**
Fantastic Four #48	4.0	**$115**
Fantastic Four #49	7.5	**$200**
Fantastic Four #52	8.0	**$136**
Fantastic Four #54	9.2	**$98**
Fantastic Four #55	9.4	**$705**
Fantastic Four #55	9.2	**$260**
Fantastic Four #56	9.2	**$138**
Fantastic Four #58	9.2	**$204**
Fantastic Four #60	9.2	**$96**
Fantastic Four #61	9.2	**$82**
Fantastic Four #64	9.2	**$91**
Fantastic Four #69	9.4	**$213**
Fantastic Four #70	9.2	**$179**
Fantastic Four #72	9.2	**$153**
Fantastic Four #73	9.2	**$135**
Fantastic Four #78	9.4	**$160**
Fantastic Four #80	9.6	**$283**
Fantastic Four #82	9.6	**$296**
Fantastic Four #82	9.4	**$165**
Fantastic Four #86	9.6	**$310**
Fantastic Four #99	9.6	**$191**
Fantastic Four #111	9.6	**$150**
Fantastic Four #112	8.5	**$112**
Fantastic Four #114	9.4	**$83**
Fantastic Four #126	9.8	**$280**
Fantastic Four #128	9.6	**$108**
Fantastic Four Annual #4	9.6	**$860**
Fight Comics #40	8.5	**$250**
Flash #108	4.5	**$99**
Flash #110	7.0	**$520**
Flash #168	9.2	**$100**
Flash Comics #86	8.0	**$1,763**
Four Color #147	4.0	**$108**
Four Color #1159	9.4	**$229**
Frankenstein (Monster Of) #1	9.4	**$90**
From Beyond The Unknown #17	9.8	**$90**
G-8 And His Battle Aces #1	9.6	**$99**
Ghost Rider #1	9.0	**$150**
Ghost Rider #2	9.4	**$158**
Ghost Rider #3	9.6	**$114**
Giant-Size Spider-Man #1	9.4	**$90**
Giant-Size Spider-Man #4	9.4	**$125**
Giant-Size Super-Heroes #1	9.6	**$100**
Giant-Size Super-Stars #1	9.6	**$100**
Giant-Size Werewolf #5	9.8	**$178**
Giant-Size X-Men #1	9.4	**$1,450**
Giant-Size X-Men #1	8.5	**$517**
Giant-Size X-Men #1	8.5	**$515**
Giant-Size X-Men #1	8.5	**$447**
Great Comics #1	9.4	**$356**
Green Lantern Vol. 2 #1	8.0	**$2,370**
Green Lantern Vol. 2 #1	5.0	**$405**
Green Lantern Vol. 2 #2	4.5	**$150**
Green Lantern Vol. 2 #35	9.4	**$325**
Green Lantern Vol. 2 #38	9.4	**$325**
Green Lantern Vol. 2 #45	9.0	**$154**
Green Lantern Vol. 2 #58	9.4	**$225**
Green Lantern Vol. 2 #59	9.2	**$239**
Green Lantern Vol. 2 #76	8.5	**$200**
Green Lantern Vol. 2 #76	7.5	**$96**
Green Lantern Vol. 2 #81	9.6	**$223**
Green Lantern Vol. 2 #86	9.4	**$150**
Gunsmoke #17	9.4	**$195**
Hawkman #1	9.0	**$518**
Hawkman #1	8.0	**$255**
House Of Mystery #195	9.6	**$250**
Hulk Grey #1	9.9	**$100**
Humphrey Comics #13	9.6	**$99**
Humphrey Comics #14	9.6	**$99**
Incredible Hulk #1	6.0	**$900**
Incredible Hulk #1	4.5	**$1,300**
Incredible Hulk #4	9.0	**$1,975**
Incredible Hulk #5	5.0	**$255**
Incredible Hulk #6	5.5	**$305**
Incredible Hulk #102	9.2	**$255**
Incredible Hulk #102	9.2	**$255**
Incredible Hulk #107	9.6	**$311**
Incredible Hulk #107	9.4	**$133**
Incredible Hulk #181	9.6	**$4,250**
Incredible Hulk #181	9.4	**$2,200**
Incredible Hulk #181	9.4	**$2,000**
Incredible Hulk #181	9.4	**$1,840**
Incredible Hulk #181	8.0	**$620**
Incredible Hulk #181	7.5	**$405**
Incredible Hulk #181	7.0	**$377**
Incredible Hulk #181	7.0	**$370**
Incredible Hulk #181	5.0	**$188**
Incredible Hulk #340	9.8	**$198**
Invaders, The #1	9.8	**$355**
Iron Fist #14	9.4	**$231**
Iron Fist #14	9.2	**$183**
Iron Fist #14	9.0	**$117**
Iron Fist (35 Cent) #14	6.0	**$345**
Iron Man #12	9.6	**$204**
Iron Man #55	9.4	**$306**
Iron Man #55	9.2	**$208**
Jo-Jo Comics #21	6.5	**$128**
Journey Into Mystery #73	7.5	**$455**
Journey Into Mystery #84	7.5	**$730**
Journey Into Mystery #85	7.5	**$677**
Journey Into Mystery #90	7.5	**$416**
Journey Into Mystery #104	8.0	**$114**
Journey Into Mystery #119	8.5	**$133**
Journey Into Mystery #121	8.0	**$114**
Journey Into Mystery Annual #1	7.5	**$120**
Junior #12	3.5	**$174**
Justice League		

INSURANCE For The Comic Book Collector



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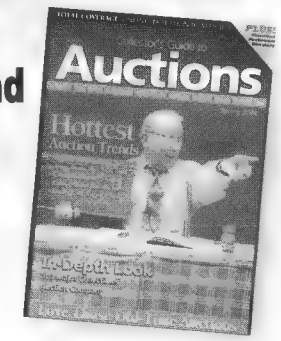

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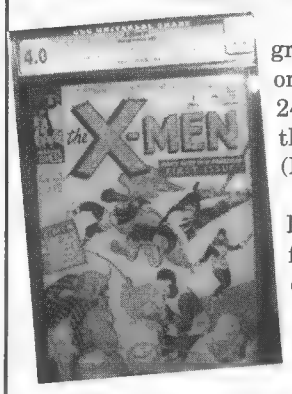
X-Men #1 sells for $975



A copy of *X-Men* #1 (Sep 63) graded 4.0 (VG) sold for $975 on Nov. 27 on eBay. There are 245 copies graded better, with the highest graded 9.8 (NM/MT).

The issue, written by Stan Lee and drawn by Jack Kirby, features the first appearance of the original X-team: Cyclops, Iceman, Angel, Beast, and Marvel Girl.

– Nate Melby

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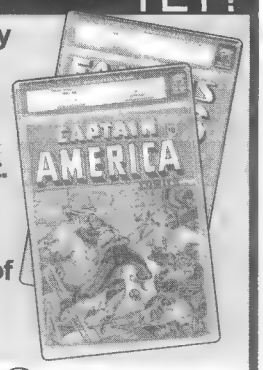

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37 VG	304.00	33 TA G	118.00	100 VG ex corner of c M G	250.00	138 Poor	14.00
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39 G+	122.00	35 TA G-VG	167.00	103 VG-F	108.00	109 Fair-G	21.00
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46 G+	88.00	38 Fair	90.00	109 VG	86.00	44 VG	80.00
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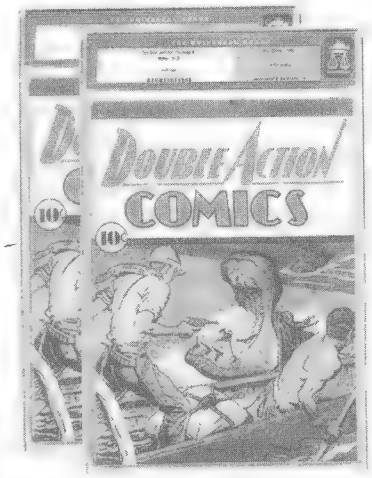

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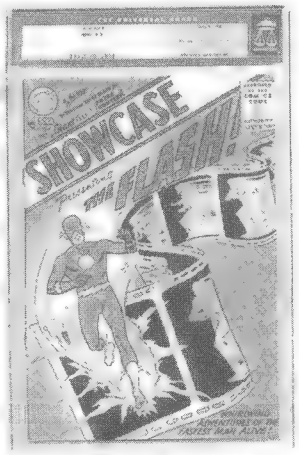

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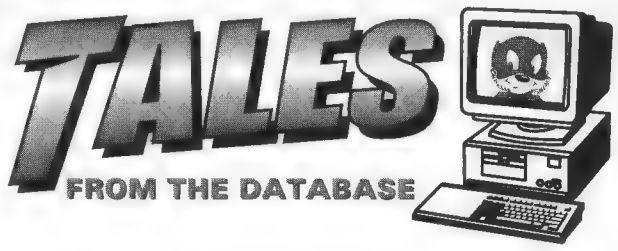
#107 (fn) $15.00
#108 (vf-) small mark on cvr $50.00
#108 (fn-) $10.00
#109 (vf-) $20.00
#110 (vg) water mark $15.00
#110 (fn-) $10.00
Young Romance
#6 (vg/fn) $70.00
#16 (vg+) $35.00
#128 (fn-) $12.00
#130 (fn-) $15.00
#143 (vg) $6.00
#147 (fn) $18.00
#190 (fn-) $4.00
#196 (fn-) $3.00
#198 (vg-) $8.00
#199 (vf-) $40.00
#206 (fn-) $3.00
#207 (vg) $2.00
Youthful Romances
#16 (fr/gd) $10.00
Action
#21 (vg+) water stain, rest $575.00
#24 (fr) tape on spine, tear seals $200.00
#34 (fn/vf) $600.00
#53 (fr) $150.00
#94 (fn-) $260.00
#97 (fn+) centerfolds loose at bottom staple $225.00
#106 (vg) small tear $150.00
#135 (fn-) $120.00
#168 (fn-) $120.00
#174 (gd/vg) $60.00
#184 (gd) miscut, tape on cvr $35.00
#185 (fn/vf) $205.00
#187 (vg-) $70.00
Adventure
#66 (fn+) rest. $450.00
#71 (fn+) $500.00
#95 (vf-) $400.00
#96 (fn/vf) $400.00
#98 (vg/fn) $250.00
#99 (fn/vf) writing on cvr $350.00
#159 (pr) $25.00
#199 (vg+) $70.00
#204 (gd/vg) $45.00
#207 (vg) $60.00
#208 (fn/vf) $150.00
All American
#54 (CGC apparent NM-9.2) cvr cleaned & pressed $700.00
All Flash
#17 (fn-) $225.00
#20 (fn-) $225.00
#24 (fn) $225.00
All Star
#5 (vg-) tiny holes through book $650.00
#6 (gd) $450.00
#7 (fr) parts of cover missing $200.00
#12 (gd+) tape on spine $250.00
#13 (gd+) page missing, spine repair $175.00
#14 (fr) coverless, tape on spine $50.00
#15 (fr/gd) no back cover, tape on spine $125.00
#18 (vg-) top staple pop $275.00
#19 (gd/vg) $275.00
#23 (gd/fn) $400.00
Batman
#6 (CGC apparent FN/VF 7) Restored $1,100.00
#6 (gd/vg) $700.00
#19 (fr) $180.00
#24 (vg-) $210.00
#25 (gd+) $220.00
#26 (vg/fn) $380.00
#27 (vg+) $450.00
#28 (vg+) $325.00
#29 (vg/fn) $280.00
#31 (gd) $150.00
#32 (vg+) $300.00
#32 (gd/vg) $150.00
#32 (vg) restoration $145.00
#32 (ga/vg) $125.00
#33 (vg) loose centerfold $240.00
#33 (vg-) $190.00
#33 (vg-) $175.00
#34 (vg/fn) $550.00
#34 (gd/vg) $175.00
#34 (gd+) bottom staple pop $100.00
#35 (fr/gd) tape on spine $100.00
#37 (vg-) $325.00
#39 (vg+) $300.00
#40 (vg) $300.00
#40 (vg) tear on back cvr $300.00
#48 (vg) Canadian copy $150.00
#51 (gd/vg) $100.00
#54 (vg) $150.00
#60 (gd) $75.00
#61 (fr) $50.00
#70 (fr) $40.00
#77 (vg+) $130.00
#77 (gd+) $70.00
#77 (gd+) $70.00
#79 (vg+) $135.00
#79 (gd) $75.00
#82 (gd) $70.00
#85 (vg/fn) $140.00
#86 (vg+) $125.00
#87 (vg+) $160.00
#89 (gd/vg) $85.00
Boy Commandos
#1 (vg/fn) $1,100.00
#3 (vf+) $1,300.00
#5 (gd/vg) $120.00
#5 (gd+) $100.00
#6 (vg/fn) $175.00
#10 (vf) name on back cvr $250.00
#11 (fn/vf) $240.00
#12 (fn/vf) $225.00
#13 (fn/vf) $160.00
#14 (fn/vf) $160.00
#17 (vf) $200.00
#18 (vf+) $200.00
#19 (vf/nm) $225.00
#20 (vf/nm) $250.00
#20 (fn-) $75.00
#22 (fn/vf) $135.00
#27 (fn) $90.00
#29 (fn-) $140.00
#35 (fn/vf) $70.00
#36 (vf-) $260.00
Comic Cavalcade
#2 (vg/fn) $850.00
#3 (fn/vf) $1,450.00
#4 (fn+) $800.00
#6 (fn/vf) $600.00
#7 (fn/vf) $750.00
#11 (vf-) $750.00
Detective
#44 (vg) $475.00
#47 (vg) $550.00
#57 (vg+) $400.00
#62 (vg-) tape on cvr $500.00
#61 (fn) 2 staples added $230.00
#87 (fr) cvr & Batman story only $25.00
#105 (vg+) $200.00
#110 (fn/vf) name on cover $175.00
#114 (vg/fn) $275.00
#115 (fn-) $300.00
#117 (fn/vf) 2 sm. Holes through book $250.00
#121 (fn/vf) name on cover $200.00
#123 (vg/fn) $200.00
#125 (fn-) $225.00
#127 (vg/fn) $155.00
#157 (gd/vg) $90.00
#160 (gd) $60.00
#166 (fn) $225.00
#167 (vg) $115.00
#182 (vf-) writing on cvr $165.00
#188 (vg-) loose centerfold $85.00
#194 (vg/fn) $110.00
#198 (vg/fn) $100.00
#198 (vg+) $80.00
#200 (fn) $225.00
#201 (vg) $75.00
#206 (vg) $100.00
#210 (fn+) $150.00
More Fun
#18 (vf) Mile High (rest) $6,000.00
#61 (vg-) color touch $700.00
Real Fact
#5 (fn/vf) minor restoration $675.00
Real Fact Comics
#1 (fn/vf) $250.00
Sensation
#34 (gd+) spine split $60.00
#41 (gd/vg) writing on cvr $80.00
#48 (vg-) piece out of cvr $90.00
#92 (gd/vg) $90.00
#114 (vg/fn) $90.00
Star Spangled
#14 (gd/vg) $200.00
#49 (fn/vf) $275.00
#54 (vf) name written on cover $225.00
#65 (fn/vf) $775.00
#70 (vf) $500.00
#73 (fn+) $250.00
#99 (vg/fn) $150.00
#117 (fn-) $175.00
#122 (fn/vf) $200.00
#122 (vg/fn) $125.00
Superboy
#1 (vg+) minor tear seals $1,950.00
#27 (vg/fn) $200.00
Superman
#9 (gd+) tear seals $375.00
#16 (gd/vg) $325.00
#27 (vg+) $250.00
#27 (vg) $225.00
#28 (vg+) $300.00
#28 (vg) $240.00
#29 (vg) $190.00
#35 (vg+) $230.00
#36 (fn/vf) $400.00
#37 (vg) $175.00
#43 (vg/fn) $180.00
#46 (vg) $160.00
#47 (fn+) $250.00
#49 (gd) piece out of bottom cover $75.00
#53 (vg) restored $300.00
#55 (vg) $175.00
#55 (vg-) $150.00
#65 (vf+) $400.00
#65 (fn) $180.00
#66 (fn-) $155.00
#72 (vg+) $125.00
#72 (vg+) restapled $125.00
#73 (gd) $85.00
#74 (fn-) staples replaced $170.00
#76 (fn-) $600.00
#76 (fn-) $475.00
#77 (vg/fn) tape on spine $110.00
#79 (vg/fn) $145.00
#85 (vg/fn) $115.00
#85 (vg) $95.00
#86 (vg+) $90.00
#88 (fn-) $170.00
#89 (vg/fn) $135.00
#89 (gd/vg) $75.00
#90 (vg+) $140.00
#92 (vg) $85.00
#92 (gd/vg) $70.00
#93 (vg/fn) $90.00
#94 (vg-) piece out of corner $75.00
#94 (gd) $50.00
#95 (vg/fn) $140.00
#95 (vg) $90.00
Wonder Woman
#5 (gd) loose cvr, name on cvr $150.00
#21 (gd+) spine split $150.00
#26 (fr/gd) $80.00
#37 (gd) spine split $60.00
World's Finest
#5 (vg) $420.00
#13 (gd) $225.00
#18 (gd/vg) $265.00
#26 (vg/fn) $210.00
All American Western
#111 (vg/fn) $60.00
All Star Western
#59 (vg) $42.00
#64 (vg+) $55.00
#65 (vg) tiny hole through book $40.00
#82 (vg/fn) $25.00
#91 (fn-) $35.00
#108 (vg) $25.00
Apache Kid
#1 (fr) $20.00
Badmen
#15 (vg+) $16.00
Bill Boyd Western
#10 (fn+) $65.00
Billy the Kid
#117 (vf/nm) $5.00
#117 (vf/nm) $5.00
#117 (vf) $4.00
Black Cat Western
#19 (gd+) $25.00
Black Diamond Western
#14 (vg) $12.00
#15 (fn-) $30.00
#16 (fn-) $30.00
#20 (vg/fn) $20.00
#24 (gd/vg) $15.00
Black Fury
#17 (vg/fn) $20.00
Black Rider
#10 (fn) $85.00
Blazing West
#3 (vg) $20.00
#15 (gd/vg) $14.00
#17 (fn-) $22.00
Blazing Western
#1 (gd/vg) $30.00
Bob Colt
#2 (vg/fn) $50.00
Bobby Benson's B-Bar-B Riders
#3 (vg/fn) $26.00
#10 (fn-) $30.00
#10 (gd) $15.00
#15 (gd+) $20.00
#15 (vg) $18.00
Buck Jones f.c.
#299 (gd) writing on cvr $5.00
Buffalo Bill
#2 (vg-) $18.00
Buster Crabbe
#3 (fn-) $150.00
Cheyenne Kid
#40 (fn-) $4.00
Chief Victorio's Apache Massacre
(vg) $85.00
Cisco Kid
#6 (gd) $9.00
#12 (vg/fn) $15.00
#12 (vg/fn) $12.00
#16 (vg/fn) $16.00
#22 (vg/fn) $14.00
Cow Puncher
#1 (gd) $50.00
Cowboy Western Comics
#17 (vg) $60.00
#18 (vg) $33.00
#27 (fn-) $125.00
#39 (fn) $22.00
#51 (vg+) $14.00
Crack Western
#74 (vg) $16.00
Dale Evans f.c.
#479 (vg+) $42.00
Dale Evans
#5 (fn-) DC $65.00
#11 (gd/vg) DC $30.00
#13 (vg/fn) DC $45.00
#14 (vg) DC $28.00
#15 (vg) DC $35.00
#20 (vg+) DC $25.00
#20 (fn) $14.00
Durango
#7 (vg-) $20.00
Flying A's Range Rider
#16 (gd) $5.00
Gene Autry Bond of the Broken Arrow
(vf/nm) Quaker Oats Giveaway $90.00
Gene Autry Comics f.c.
#75 (gd) $35.00
Gene Autry Comics
#2 (vg/fn) $400.00
#4 (fr/gd) $15.00
#12 (vg) $20.00
#15 (vg+) $20.00
#19 (vg) $20.00
#21 (vg+) $18.00
#33 (fr) loose cvr $5.00
#37 (gd) $7.00
#41 (gd+) $8.00
#43 (gd) $8.00
#51 (gd+) $8.00
#57 (gd/vg) name on cvr $7.00
#58 (vg+) $12.00
#59 (vg) $10.00
#61 (vg) name on cvr $8.00
#65 (vg-) $10.00
#67 (vg-) $8.00
#71 (vg/fn) $13.00
#77 (fn) $15.00
#79 (fn/vf) $20.00
#79 (fn+) $15.00
#86 (vf-) $20.00
#87 (vg+) $10.00
#89 (fn+) $20.00
#91 (vf) $20.00
#91 (vg/fn) name on cvr $8.00
#92 (fn+) $20.00
#93 (vg/fn) $10.00
#95 (fn/vf) $20.00
#103 (gd/vg) $5.00
#104 (vg/fn) $10.00
Gene Autry Death Card Gang
(vf/nm) Quaker Oats Giveaway $90.00
Gene Autry Phantom of the Cave
(vf) Quaker Oats Giveaway $60.00
Gene Autry Riddle of Laughing Mountain
(vf/nm) Quaker Oats Giveaway $90.00
Gene Autry Secret of Lost Valley
(vf/nm) Quaker Oats Giveaway $90.00
Gene Autry's Champion
#11 (vg+) $7.00
#18 (fn) $12.00
Ghost Rider
#1 (vf/nm) $900.00
Golden Arrow
#5 (vg) $45.00
Gunhawk
#12 (vg+) $45.00
Gunsmoke f.c.
#797 (fn-) $18.00
Gunsmoke
#11 (fn) $20.00
#15 (fn+) $20.00
#22 (vf-) $25.00
#23 (fn-) $23.00
Gunsmoke Western
#48 (fr/gd) $6.00
Hooded Horseman
#21 (gd+) (#1) $15.00
Hopalong Cassidy
#13 (vf-) $65.00
#17 (vf) $100.00
#17 (fn+) pencil on cvr $100.00
#21 (fn-) $50.00
#21 (vg) $20.00
#23 (fn) $55.00
#31 (gd/vg) $20.00
#37 (vg/fn) $38.00
#38 (vg-) $20.00
#41 (vg+) $27.00
#92 (vg/fn) $60.00
#132 (fr) water marks $5.00
Indian Braves
#3 (vg) $12.00
Indian Chief
#7 (gd) $4.00
#19 (fn) $5.00
#21 (fn/vf) $10.00
Indian Fighter f.c.
#904 (fn/vf) $15.00
Indian Fighter
#1 (vg+) $18.00
Indian Warriors
#8 (fn-) (L.B. Cole cover) $30.00
Indians
#6 (gd) $18.00
#16 (vg+) $18.00
Jace Pearson of the Texas Rangers
#7 (vg+) name on cvr $10.00
Jimmy Wakely
#1 (gd/vg) $150.00
#1 (gd/vg) $145.00
#10 (vf) small ch.p at top $160.00
Johnny Mack Brown f.c.
#685 (fn-) $20.00
Johnny Mack Brown
#2 (gd) $14.00
#8 (vg) name on cvr $7.00
Johnny Ringo f.c.
#1142 (vf) $25.00
Kid Colt Outlaw
#11 (gd) coupon cut $20.00
#20 (vg+) $35.00
#36 (gd/vg) $22.00
#39 (vg) $30.00
Kid Cowboy
#2 (gd) $18.00
Little Beaver f.c.
#744 (vf+) $20.00
Lone Ranger
#2 (fn) $125.00
#3 (gd/vg) $20.00
#4 (gd+) $30.00
#5 (vf-) $135.00
#5 (fn-) $65.00
#9 (gd+) $20.00
#15 (fn-) $40.00
#34 (vg/fn) $20.00
#37 (gd+) name on cvr $8.00
#38 (gd/vg) $15.00
#41 (gd/vg) $15.00
#44 (fn-) $15.00
#50 (gd+) name on cvr $7.00
#61 (fn-) $20.00
#72 (fn-) $25.00
#74 (vg+) $10.00
#77 (vg+) $12.00
#78 (fn) $12.00
#79 (vg+) $10.00
#80 (vg/fn) $12.00
#86 (fn+) $20.00
#101 (gd+) name on cvr $6.00
#135 (vf) $45.00
Lone Ranger's Golden West
#3 (vg) $14.00
Lone Ranger's Silver
#9 (fn) $12.00
Monte Hale
#33 (vg) $30.00
#34 (vg) $27.00
#40 (fn-) $35.00
#40 (gd) $14.00
#41 (fn/vf) $50.00
#43 (vg) $20.00
#47 (vg) $28.00
#52 (vg+) $20.00
#53 (vg/fn) $25.00
Pioneer West Romances
#5 (vg+) $42.00
#6 (vg) $32.00
Prize Western
#69 (gd/vg) $19.00
#71 (vg/fn) $24.00
#81 (fn-) $40.00
Real Western Hero
#72 (vf/nm) $115.00
#72 (fn-) missing top staple $50.00
#73 (fn/vf) $75.00
#75 (fn+) $65.00
Red Mountain featuring Quantrell's Raiders!
(gd) $25.00
Red Ryder
#76 (vg-) $7.00
Redskin
#7 (gd/vg) $14.00
#9 (vg+) $14.00
#10 (vg+) $16.00
#12 (vg) $15.00
Rocky Lane
#3 (gd/vg) $24.00
#6 (fn-) $55.00
#7 (vg/fn) $55.00
#10 (vg+) $40.00
#12 (vg/fn) $35.00
#14 (vg/fn) $35.00
#16 (vg/fn) $25.00
#16 (vg/fn) $25.00
Rod Cameron
#1 (fn-) $150.00
#2 (fn/vf) $125.00
#4 (fn-) $50.00
#16 (vg/fn) $40.00
Roy Rogers
#8 (gd/vg) $20.00
#15 (vg-) $15.00
#29 (gd) $6.00
#46 (fn) $45.00
#48 (gd+) $7.00
#54 (vg) initials on cvr $10.00
#58 (vg+) $12.00
#62 (vf-) $40.00
#75 (fn-) name on cvr $15.00
#78 (vf) $25.00
#82 (vf) $30.00
#86 (vf+) $30.00
#96 (vg+) $15.00
Saddle Justice
#7 (gd/vg) $50.00
Silvertip f.c.
#731 (fn/vf) $22.00
#835 (fn/vf) $25.00
#898 (vf/nm) $26.00
#898 (vf-) $12.00

1979: 6% – 1987: 70%

Comics shops set the stage for newsstand collapse



By **Chuck Rozanski**

In last week's column, I wrote that the percentage of comics sold in comics specialty shops grew from 6% in 1979 to approximately 70% by 1987. While this was a remarkable achievement in terms of an industry switching from one form of marketing (newsstand distribution) almost entirely to another (direct-market comics shops), it also set the stage for the greatest collapse in sales in the entire history of the medium. The reality of the situation is that the overwhelming success of comics shops during the 1980s is one of the main reasons we're seeing such poor new-comics sales today.

Long-time readers of this column probably are already aware that I believe that the main reason comics shops were able to rapidly supersede newsstands during the 1980s is that direct-market comics distributors delivered comics to specialty stores approximately one week earlier than local newsstand distributors (IDs) supplied their accounts. Moreover, the specialty stores made it a point to provide the full range of published comics to their customers, as opposed to the often hit-and-miss title stocking provided by most newsstands. Given that most hardcore comics fans are impatient to read the next issue of their favorite titles, the one-week shipping advantage and complete supply quickly caused most avid comics fans to shift their business into the rapidly growing comics-specialty-store network around the world.

While that sounds like a great development for the direct market, it ended up destroying the entry point for most new readers. While most comics-specialty shops do a great job of servicing their existing clients, the distressing truth is that many shops inadvertently (or sometimes blatantly) give the appearance of being private clubs, where only the already-initiated need apply. Newsstands, on the other hand, are egalitarian, offering everyone the same access to new comics and magazines, in an environment that's usually very family-friendly. The vast majority of the base of comics-buying customers existing in 1980 began their purchasing of comics through a local mass-market outlet of some kind and only later shifted their loyalty to a comics specialty store.

Once the exodus of readers into comics shops began, however, the economics of carrying comics were destroyed within the newsstand market. Like most consumer goods, comics have to generate a certain level of sales per square foot in order to justify the space a store allocates to them. With comics, this implied required rate of return is even higher than with most other goods, since younger comics readers are notorious for leaving stacks of comics lying next to the spinner rack in mass-market stores, thus costing the store additional labor to keep the comics area tidy. With sales of comics melting away into the much more efficient direct-market specialty stores, only the most dedicated newsstands chose to keep comics available by the late 1980s.

Where this really became a problem was in the false sense of profitability felt by the publishers. While it was seldom that a newsstand sold more than 30% of the new comics it displayed (newsstands were able to return unsold copies for full credit at the end of the month), comics specialty stores were a guaranteed 100% sell-through, since they purchased on a non-returnable basis.

Freed from the enormous printing costs of publishing three comics for every one that sold — and being able to eliminate the administrative costs of issuing credits for returns — the publishers suddenly found themselves awash in profits.

That was the good news. The bad news was that all those unsold copies sent to newsstands were the #1 method through which publishers reached out for new readers. Eliminate newsstand sales and profits boom in the short term, but new readers become scarce.

Without new readers, the only way to keep profits growing steadily is to raise cover prices steadily. Thus begins the vicious cycle of having to raise cover prices because unit sales are declining — and then having sales decline even further because prices are rising.

This self-reinforcing negative trend is why we have $3 comics of which that the publisher is lucky if it sells 20,000 to 30,000 copies (compared to 100,000+ copies on every issue published in 1979 at 40¢). Simply put: Were it not for the potential additional future revenue from trade-paperback sales, new comics as we know them would already be long gone.

Having been one of the people who started the shrinking of the newsstand business, I often feel more than a bit guilty when I see how few young people are reading comics today.

In many regards, those of us who built the direct market during the early 1980s at the targeted expense of the newsstands should be held in some measure culpable for the destruction of the comics industry.

That said, however, the flip side of the argument is that the newsstand market for comics was already disintegrating in 1979, so we helped stave off for 20 years the inevitable replacement of printed forms of entertainment by the newly created electronic forms. I can argue the issue both ways.

The fact remains, however, that, because of the dearth of new readers in the comics world, we now are in a crisis from which it is going to be difficult to extricate ourselves.

Difficult but most certainly not impossible.

To be continued ...

What customers are buying ...

Top Golden and Silver Age sold
by Mile High, from Nov. 21-27, 2003:

1. *Amazing Fantasy* #15 in GD	$1,680.00
2. *Avengers* Vol. 1 #4 in FN	$750.00
3. *Casper the Friendly Ghost* #1 in FN	$677.46
4. *Action Comics* #252 in GD	$174.24
5. *Rudolph Treasury* #1 in FN	$136.20
6. *Amazing Spider-Man* Vol. 1 #53 in VF	$136.08
7. *Tales to Astonish* #6 in VG	$120.00
8. *Strange Tales* #114 in VG	$107.31
9. *Creepy* #1 in NM	$102.15
10. *Four-Color* #291 (Donald Duck) in GD	$72.80

Top CGC-graded comics sold
by Mile High, from Nov. 21-27, 2003:

1. *Amazing Fantasy* #15 in 3.5	$2,520.00
2. *Star Wars* #23 (Mile High 2) in 9.6	$181.58
3. *Star Wars* #31 (Mile High 2) in 9.6	$108.92
4. *Captain America* #118 in 9.2	$75.00
5. *Captain America* #119 in 9.2	$70.00
6. *Batman* #249 in 9.0	$70.00
7. *Sandman* #3 in 9.6	$65.38
8. *Avengers* Vol. 1 #184 (Mile High 2) in 9.4	$60.00
9. *Tomb Raider/Darkness Spec.* (foil) #1 in 9.8	$43.80
10. *Tomb Raider/Darkness Special* #1 in 9.8	$23.55

Top Modern comics sold
by Mile High, from Nov. 21-27, 2003:

1. *Ultimate Spider-Man* #1 in NM	$168.00
2. *X-Men* Vol. 2 #1 (cvr A, DF remark) in NM	$97.20
3. *Wolverine: The Origin* #1 in NM	$96.00
4. *Ultimate X-Men* #1 in VF	$92.00
5. *Amazing Spider-Man* #300 in NM	$90.85
6. *G.I. Joe* #155 in NM	$90.00
7. *Amazing Spider-Man* #101 in VG	$65.60
8. *Comico Primer* #2 in FN	$61.50
9. *Amaz. Spider-Man* V. 2 #1 (MV auth.) in NM	$56.00
10. *Amazing Spider-Man* #300 in VF	$52.19

Top-selling comics
by Mile High, from Nov. 21-27, 2003:

1. *Gotham by Gaslight*
2. *Sandman Special* #1
3. *Daredevil* #179
4. *Legends of the Dark Knight* #1
5. *Superman/Batman* #1 (3rd print)
6. *Katy Keene Special* #1
7. *X-treme X-Men* #10
8. *Batman* #439
9. *Avengers* #71
10. *Fantastic Four: Unstable Molecules* #1

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Dec 17 CA, City of Industry. Wed. Comic Book & Collectible Show. 19649 San Jose Ave, SH: 3:30pm-9:30pm, T: 250, A: free. Frank Zamarripa, 19649 San Jose Ave., City of Industry, CA 91748. PH: 909-444-7955.

Dec 20 CA, City of Industry. Sat. Comic Book & Collectible Show. 19649 San Jose Ave, SH: 10am-5pm, T: 250, A: free. Frank Zamarripa, 19649 San Jose Ave., City of Industry, CA 91748. PH: 909-444-7955.

Dec 24 CA, City of Industry. Wed. Comic Book & Collectible Show. 19649 San Jose Ave, SH: 3:30pm-9:30pm, T: 250, A: free. Frank Zamarripa, 19649 San Jose Ave., City of Industry, CA 91748. PH: 909-444-7955.

Dec 27 CA, City of Industry. Sat. Comic Book & Collectible Show. 19649 San Jose Ave, SH: 10am-5pm, T: 250, A: free. Frank Zamarripa, 19649 San Jose Ave., City of Industry, CA 91748. PH: 909-444-7955.

Dec 31 CA, City of Industry. Wed. Comic Book & Collectible Show. 19649 San Jose Ave, SH: 3:30pm-9:30pm, T: 250, A: free. Frank Zamarripa, 19649 San Jose Ave., City of Industry, CA 91748. PH: 909-444-7955.

CONNECTICUT

Dec 28 CT, East Hartford. Comic Convention, Elks Hall. 148 Roberts St., SH: 11am-5pm, F: $50., A: .99. The Bookie, Hal Kinney, 155 Burnside Ave., East Hartford, CT 06108. PH: 860-289-1208 (afternoons).

DELAWARE

Dec 28 DE, Newark. Sports Card, Comic Book & Collectible Show, Aetna Fire Hall. Rt. 273, SH: 10am-3pm, A: $2., 12 & under free. A to Z Promos., Bob Harper, 822 Trophy Way, Bear, DE 19701. PH: 302-438-0967.

Jan 25 DE, Newark. Sports Card, NASCAR, Comic Book & Collectible Show, Aetna Fire Hall. Rt. 273, SH: 10am-3pm, A: $2., 12 & under free. A to Z Promos., Bob Harper, 822 Trophy Way, Bear, DE 19701. PH: 302-438-0967.

FLORIDA

Dec 21 FL, Orlando. Collectible Show, Radisson Barcello Hotel. 8444 International Dr., SH: 10am-5pm, A: free. CCC Promos., PH: 954-579-7398.

Dec 27-28 FL, Fort Lauderdale. Holiday Convention, Pompano Beach Civic Ctr. 1801 NE 6th St., SH: 10am-5pm, T: 100, A: $6., $10. 2-day pass. Charles Cerrito, PH: 954-579-7398.

Jan 10-11 FL, Orlando. 15th Annual FX Extravaganza Collectible Toy & Comic Book Show, Orange Cty. Convention Ctr. 9800 International Dr., T: 1,100. Marz Prod. Inc., PH: 941-360-6666.

GEORGIA

Feb 1 GA, Atlanta. Comic Convention, Marriott Hotel-Century Ctr. I-85 exit 91, Clairmont Rd., SH: 11am-5pm, T: 65-6', F: $500., A: $4. Wesley Tillander, PO Box 1251, Hogansville, GA 30230. PH: 706-837-4976.

ILLINOIS

Dec 28 IL, Orland Park. Sports Cards & More Show, Civic Center. 147th St., 1 blk. W. La Grange Rd., SH: 9am-2pm, T: 80-6', F: $33., A: $1. John Leary, 9522 W. Shore Dr., Oak Lawn, IL 60453. PH: 708-423-1758.

Jan 4 IL, Bridgeview. Comic Book, NASCAR, Toys, Sports Cards, Hot Wheels & More Show, Oremus Center. 1 blk. W. of Harlem Ave. at 79th St., SH: 9am-2pm, T: 65-8', F: $35. for 1, $60. for 2, A: $2. John Leary, 9522 W. Shore Dr., Oak Lawn, IL 60453. PH: 708-423-1758.

Jan 4 IL, Springfield. Comic Book Convention, Signature Inn. 3090 Stevenson Dr., SH: 10am-4pm, A: free. Alan, PH: 309-657-1599.

Jan 10 IL, Orland Park. Comic Books & More Show, Civic Center. 147th St., 1 blk. W. La Grange Rd., SH: 9am-2pm, T: 80-6', F: $33. for 1, $60. for 2, A: $1. John Leary, 9522 W. Shore Dr., Oak Lawn, IL 60453. PH: 708-423-1758.

Jan 25 IL, Orland Park. Comic Books & More Show, Civic Center. 147th St., 1 blk. W. La Grange Rd., SH: 9am-2pm, T: 80-6', F: $33. for 1, $60. for 2, A: $1. John Leary, 9522 W. Shore Dr., Oak Lawn, IL 60453. PH: 708-423-1758.

Jan 25 IL, Gurnee. Comic Book Convention, Holiday Inn. 6161 W. Grand Ave., SH: 10am-3pm, A: $2. Jim, PH: 847-336-9963.

INDIANA

Jan 3 IN, Highland. Comic Book & Sports Card Show, Lincoln Ctr. 2450 Lincoln St., SH: 10am-4pm. PH: 219-662-8029.

Jan 10-11 IN, Elkhart. Comic Book & Collectibles Show, Pierre Moran Mall. 154 W. Hively Ave., SH: Sat. 10am-6pm, Sun. 12noon-5pm, T: 45-8', A: free. Dave Brody, PO Box 724, South Bend, IN 46624. PH: 219-272-9198 or Ken Gaipa, PH: 219-389-9962.

Jan 17-18 IN, Dyer. Comic Books & Sports Card Show, Galleria Bldg. 425 Joliet St., US Rt. 30, SH: 10am-6pm. PH: 219-662-8029.

KANSAS

Dec 27 KS, Shawnee. Comic Book Convention, Hampton Inn. I-435 at Midland Dr. exit, SH: 10am-4pm, A: free. Ken, PH: 913-764-8888.

MARYLAND

Dec 28 MD, Laurel. Comic Book & Non-Sports Card Show, Best Western. 15101 Switzer Ln. (Exit 33B off I-95), SH: 11am-4pm, A: $1., under 7 free. Fred Edeson, PH: 410-569-8357.

Feb 1 MD, Baltimore. Comic Book & Non-Sports Card Show, Airport Marriott. 1743 W. Nursery Rd., SH: 11am-4pm, A: $2.50, under 7 free. Fred Edeson, PH: 410-569-8357.

MICHIGAN

Dec 27 MI, Livonia. Encore Con, Elks 2246. 31117 Plymouth Rd., SH: 10am-4pm, T: 50, F: $45. in advance, $50. day of show, A: $3., ages 6 & under free. Motor City Conventions, Michael Goldman or Gary Bishop, 19785 W. 12 Mile Rd. PMB 231, Southfield, MI 48076. PH: 248-426-8059.

Dec 27-28 MI, Madison Heights. Collectable Comic Book Show, UFCW Union Hall Local 876. 876 Horace Brown Dr., SH: 9am-3pm. Classic Prod., Joseph Pellegrino, PO Box 472, Fraser, MI 48026. PH: 586-775-3289 or 790-6290.

Jan 25 MI, Livonia. X-Trava-Con, Knights of Columbus Hall. 19801 Farmington Rd. (bet. 7 Mile & 8 Mile Rds.), SH: 10am-4pm, T: 45-8', F: $45. in advance, $50. day of show, A: $3., ages 6 & under free. Motor City Conventions, Michael Goldman or Gary Bishop, 19785 W. 12 Mile Rd. PMB 231, Southfield, MI 48076. PH: 248-426-8059.

MISSOURI

Dec 28 MO, Chesterfield. Comic Book Convention, Hampton Inn & Stes. 5 McBride & Son Ctr. Dr., SH: 10am-4pm, A: free. Alan, PH: 309-657-1599.

NEW HAMPSHIRE

Jan 25 NH, Portsmouth. Seacoast Comic Book & Sports Card Show, Yokens Convention Center. Rt. 1, SH: 9am-3pm, T: 110, F: $60., A: $3. Chris Morse, 919 Lafayette Rd., Seabrook, NH 03874. PH: 603-474-2283 or 898-4151.

NEW JERSEY

Dec 28 NJ, Bordentown. Comic Book Show, Armory. Rt. 206 S., SH: 9:30am-3:30pm, T: 50, F: $45., A: $2. RK Promos., Rob or Karen Gomberg, 3 Rachel Ct., Franklin Park, NJ 08823. PH: 732-422-9365 or Mike Leon, PH: 215-396-8016.

Dec 28 NJ, Wayne. Comic Book Expo, Holiday Inn. Rt. 46 Service Rd., SH: 10am-4pm, T: 30-8', F: $60., A: $2. J. Paul, 10 Cross St., Montclair, NJ 07424. PH: 973-783-0608.

Jan 4 NJ, Wayne. Comic Book & Collectibles Show, Co. #1 Firehouse. 1 Parish Dr. off Rt. 23 N., Lincoln Park Exit, SH: 8am-3pm, T: 80, A: $1, under 12 free. Phil De Mario, PO Box 4094, Wayne, NJ 07474. PH: 973-726-9897.

Jan 18 NJ, Bordentown. Comic Book & Sports Card Show, Armory. Rt. 206 S., SH: 9:30am-3:30pm, T: 50, F: $45. A: $2. RK Promos., Rob or Karen Gomberg, 3 Rachel Ct., Franklin Park, NJ 08823. PH: 732-422-9365 or Mike Leon, PH: 215-396-8016.

Feb 1 NJ, Wayne. Comic Book & Collectibles Show, Co. #1 Firehouse. 1 Parish Dr. off Rt. 23 N., Lincoln Park Exit, SH: 8am-3pm, T: 80, A: $1, under 12 free. Phil De Mario, PO Box 4094, Wayne, NJ 07474. PH: 973-726-9897.

NEW YORK

Dec 21 NY, Brooklyn. Comic Book & Collectible Show, Golden Gate Inn. Knapp St. & Shore Pkwy., SH: 9am-3pm, A: free. Mark, PH: 718-266-1625.

Dec 21 NY, Rochester. CollectorFest, The Party House. 677 Beahan Rd., SH: 10am-3pm, T: 30-8', F: $40., A: free. Ernie's Cards, Ernest Orlando, 264 Park Ave. Rear Apt., Rochester, NY 14607. PH: 585-241-3198.

Jan 4 NY, Melville-Long Island. Collectibles Show. 585 Route 110, SH: 9am-3pm, T: 57, A: free. George Schultheis, PO Box 1654, Seaford, NY 11783. PH: 516-804-0047 or 361-9503.

Jan 24-25 NY, New York City. Big Apple Comic Book, Art & Toys Show, Penn Plaza Pavilion. 401 33rd St. & 7th Ave., SH: Sat. 11am-7pm, Sun. 10am-6pm, A: $8. PH: 201-865-3288.

Feb 8 NY, Melville-Long Island. Collectibles Show. 585 Route 110, SH: 9am-3pm, T: 57, A: free. George Schultheis, PO Box 1654, Seaford, NY 11783. PH: 516-804-0047 or 361-9503.

OHIO

Jan 4 OH, Cleveland. Comic & Sci-Fi Con, Knight's Party Center. KOC Hall, 29101 Euclid Ave. (.5 mi. E. of I-90 & Exit 186), SH: 10am-3pm, T: 35-8', F: $55., A: $2., 6 & under free. Jeff Harper, 5220 Loma Linda NE, Canton, OH 44714. PH: 330-499-6056.

Feb 8 OH, Akron. Comic Con, Tadmor Hall. 3000 Krebs Dr., I-77 exit 120 (Arlington Rd.) off Jarvis Rd., SH: 10am-4pm, T: 60-6', F: $75., A: $3., 6 & under free. Jeff Harper, 5220 Loma Linda NE, Canton, OH 44714. PH: 330-499-6056.

SOUTH CAROLINA

Dec 27 SC, Greenville. Comic Book & Sports Card Show, Quality Inn & Stes. 1314 Pleasantburg Dr. (I-85 exit 46B), SH: 10am-4pm. Rick Fortenberry, PH: 704-424-3453, Tom Waldrop, PH: 864-244-7424 or Bob Waldrop, PH: 864-905-6570.

TEXAS

Jan 9-10 TX, Austin. TX Superhero & SciFi Collectors Expo, Crockett Ctr. 6301 Hwy. 290, SH: Fri. 12noon-6pm, Sat. 9am-6pm, T: 100, A: $8.50 for 1 day, $12.50 for 2 days. PH: 512-396-2845.

Jan 17 2004 TX, San Antonio-Live Oak. Sports Card, Comic Book & Toy Show, Civic Center. Pat Booker Rd., I-35 & Hwy. 1604, SH: 9am-5pm, T: 100-8', F: $40., A: $2., under 13 free. Eckman's Books & Collectibles, Dale E. Eckman, 8050 Pioneer Oak, Converse, TX 78109. PH: 210-945-0003.

VIRGINIA

Dec 27 VA, Tysons Corner. Comic Book & Sports Card Show, Holiday Inn-Fairfax. I-495 exit 46A, SH: 10am-4pm, T: 40-6', F: $65., A: $3. Shoff Promos. Inc., Nick Shoff, 5904 Willow Knoll Dr., Derwood, MD 20855. PH: 301-990-4929.

Feb 8 VA, Tysons Corner. Comic Book, Card & Toy Show, Doubletree Hotel. 7801 Leesburg Pike, Falls Church, VA, SH: 10am-4pm, T: 80-6', F: $95. for 1, $90. for 2nd, $85. ea. add'l., A: $3., under 5 free. Capital Associates, PH: 703-912-1993.

WISCONSIN

Feb 1 WI, West Allis. Comic Book Convention, Burnham Bowl. 6016 W. Burnham Ave., SH: 11am-4pm. Clayton Dietl, PH: 414-328-3675.

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His DC debut

Even before Jack Kirby made the break from Marvel to create his Fourth World comics for DC, he did the illustrations for a Whitman Superman card game.

Very unauthorized

Dr. Slump, a series by the creators of *Dragon Ball*, features a super-deformed version of Superman called *Suppaman*. There are even toys of this character.

Strange encounters

One popular publicity picture from 1941 shows Gene Autry on horseback in Western costume conversing with friend Tom Tyler in his Captain Marvel uniform.

A good start

Joi Lansing became famous as a beautiful blonde on *I Love Lucy* and *The Beverly Hillbillies*, but she was known as Superman's wife in an episode of *The Adventures of Superman*.

The unknown Batman

Many know that Lyle Waggoner tested for the role of Batman in the 1960s TV show. But late in the decade, a commercial was made for equal wages for women. Burt Ward and Yvonne Craig returned as Robin and Batgirl, while William Dozier narrated. But Adam West was unavailable, so Dick Gautier (Hymie the Robot on *Get Smart* and a cartoonist in his own right) put on the cape and cowl.

On a similar note, *Mission: Impossible* strongman Peter Lupus played Superman for an Air Force commercial and signed a deal with DC to continue to play the part for appearances but was released after he posed for *Playgirl*.

The inflatable Hulk

In the early 1970s, Marvel Comics began making its characters available for appearances at comics and toy stores. The first Hulk costume featured normal sized legs and feet, while being inflated above the waist to a height of 12 feet.

Double duty

Being primarily known for the part of Gloria Bunker on *All in the Family*, Sally Struthers has also been the cartoon voice of Pebbles Flinstone and Cathy.

- Mike Curtis

ADVERTISERS' INDEX

A
All Star Auctions....41
Amazing Creations Ink....24
Archie Comic Publishing....24
Asher, Owen....41

B
Bags Unlimited....11
Bearmanor Media....24
Bedrock City Comic Co...37, 43
Big Apple Conventions, Inc...46
Bill Cole Enterprises, Inc...3, 37
Boal, Rick....40
Boren, Edward....42

C
Carreras, Brett....41
Central Park Media....24
CGC....45
Circ Promotions-KP....39
Claypool Comics....9
Collectibles Insurance Agency....39
Comic Conservation....37
Comic Heaven....37
Comiclink.com....42
Comics Buyer's Guide....9, 37, 46, 50, 52, 53

D
Diamond Comic Distributors 56
Discount Comics....37
Dispenza, Philip....41
Dragon Con....46

E
E. Gerber Products....7
Eschenberg, Conrad....51

G
Gabri-El Will....51
Gary Dolgoff Comics....42
Giles, B.T. & S.J....41
Golden Age Comics & Games37
Graphic Collectibles....51
Graphitti Designs....5

H
Heritage Capital Crp....2, 40, 42
High Quality Comics....37

J
J & S Comics....42

K
Kaso Comics....41
KP Adv Promotion....49
KP Book Promo....55
KP Bulk Promo....47
Kushin, Kirk....24

L
Los Angeles Comic Book Show....46

M
Mastronet, Inc....32
Megacon....47
Mile High Comics, Inc....33
Morgan Printing, Inc....24
Motor City Comic Con....46
Moy, Albert....37

N
NBM Publishing Company....24
Nuff Said Collectibles....37

O
Overington, Chris....42

P
Pacific Comic Exchange....41
Paperman....42
PGC Mint....43

Q
Quasar Comics....37

R
Redbeard's Book Den....37
RTS Unlimited....40
Russo, Stephen....37

S
Silver Age Comics....37
Sobolak, Ed....32
Stewart, Alex....47
Stine, Ted....42
Studio Daedalus....51

T
Tomorrow's Treasures....41
TRH Gallery....51

V
Vanguard Productions....24

W
White, Michael....42

Y
Yee, Harley....37

Retailer Directory....25
Web Directory....48

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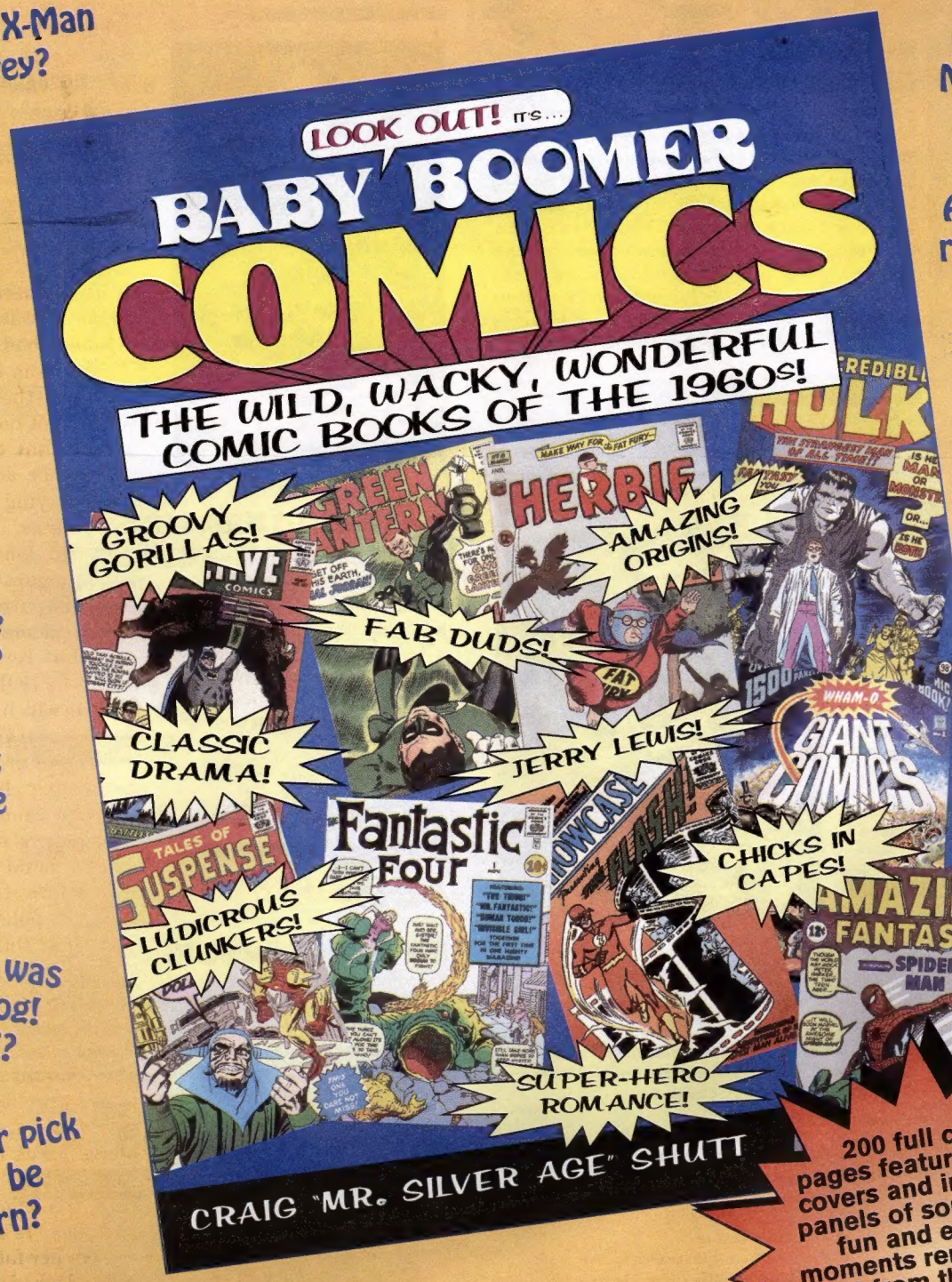

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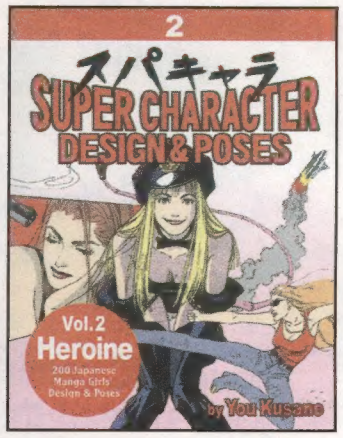

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